

THE BOOK OF
Mr. Natural



BY R. CRUMB

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

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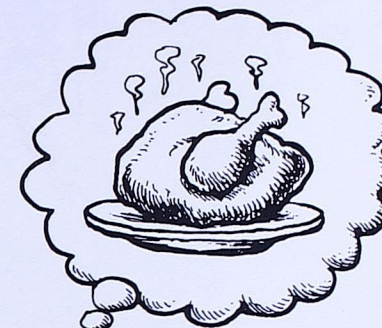
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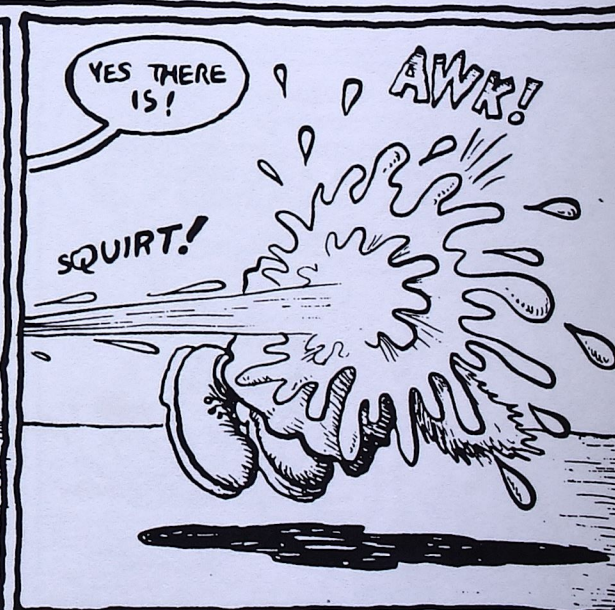
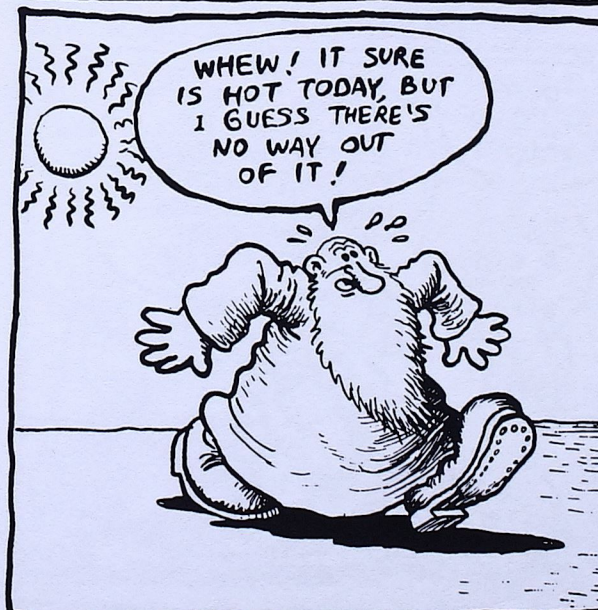
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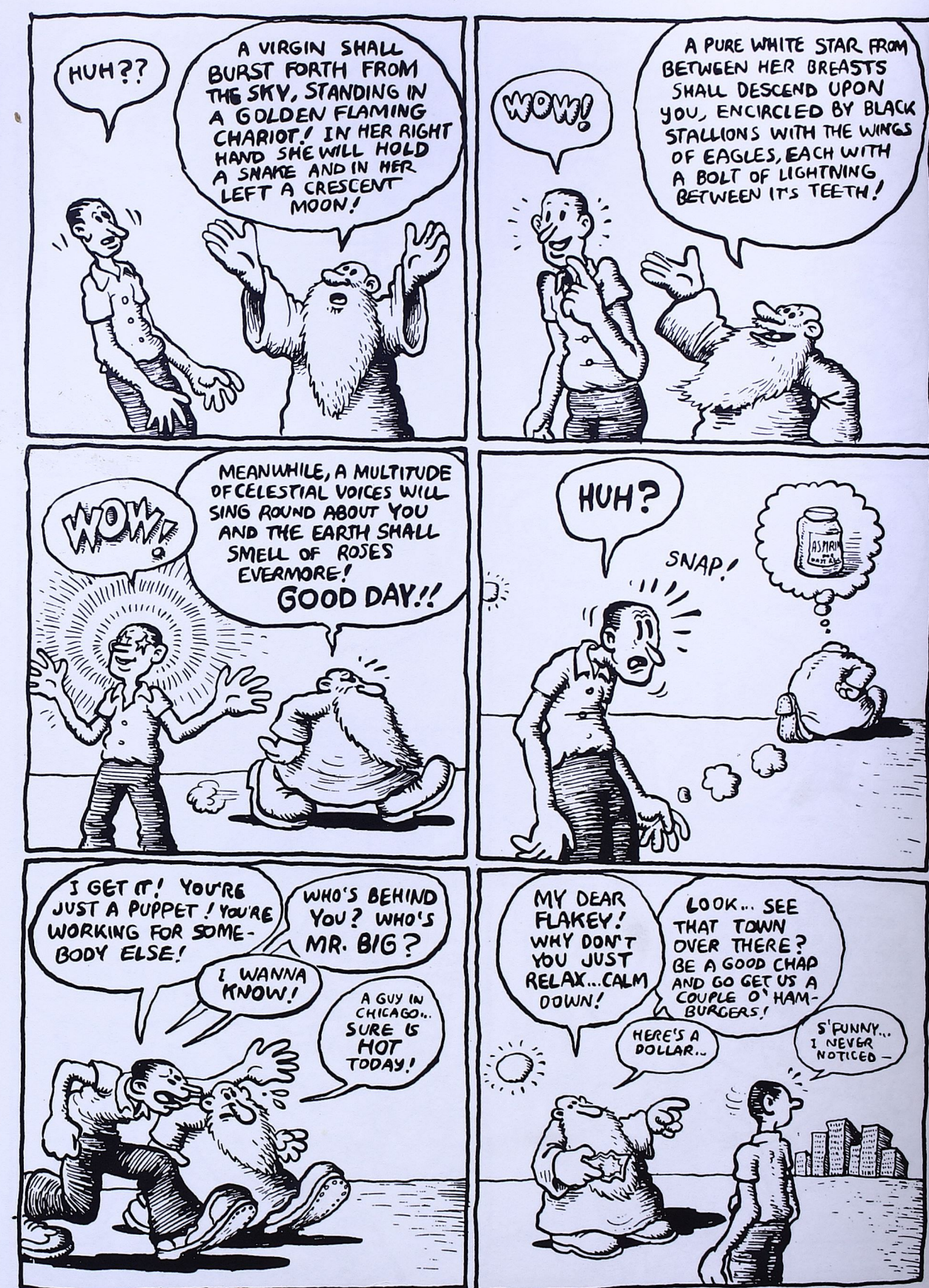
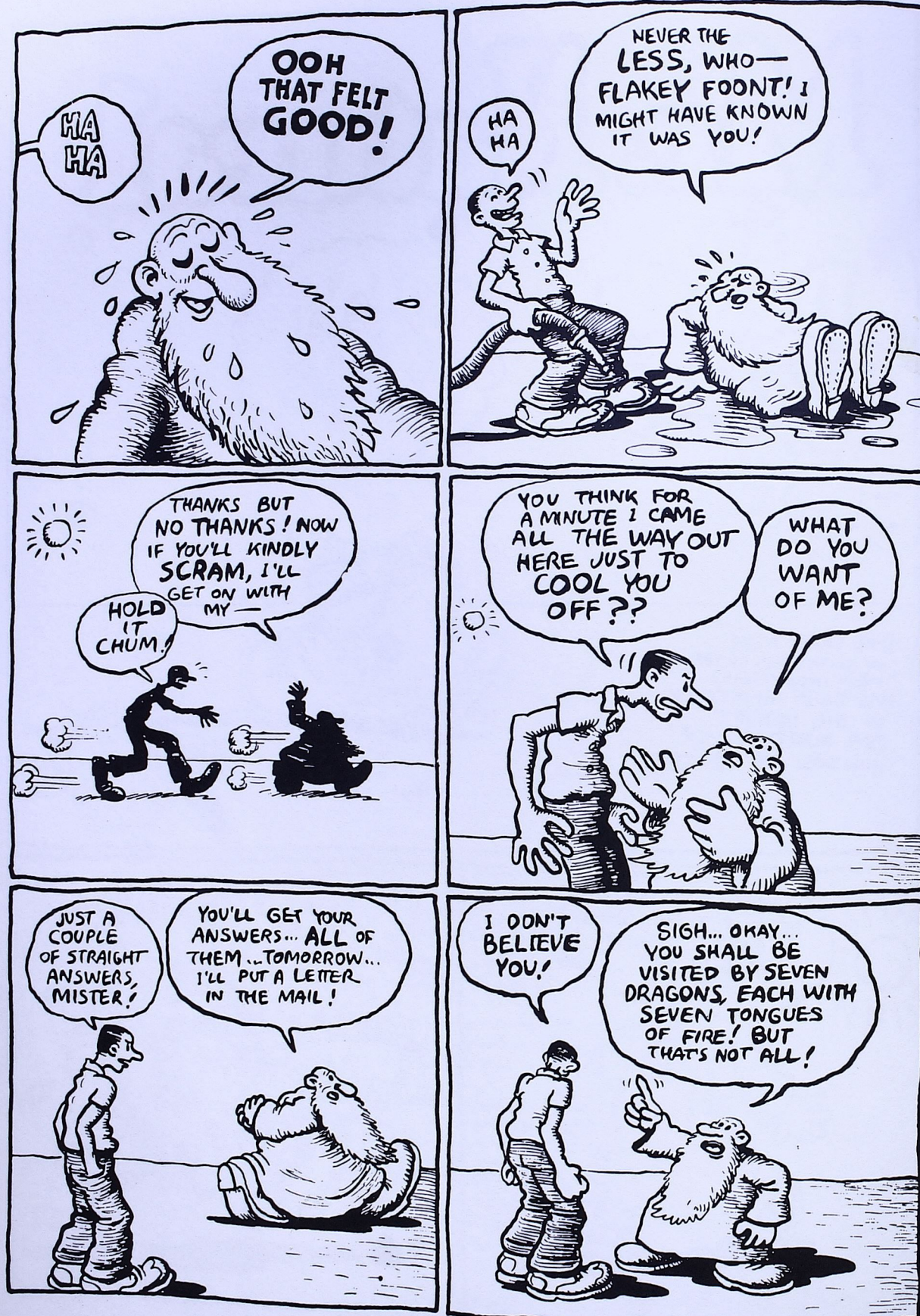
Mr. Natural

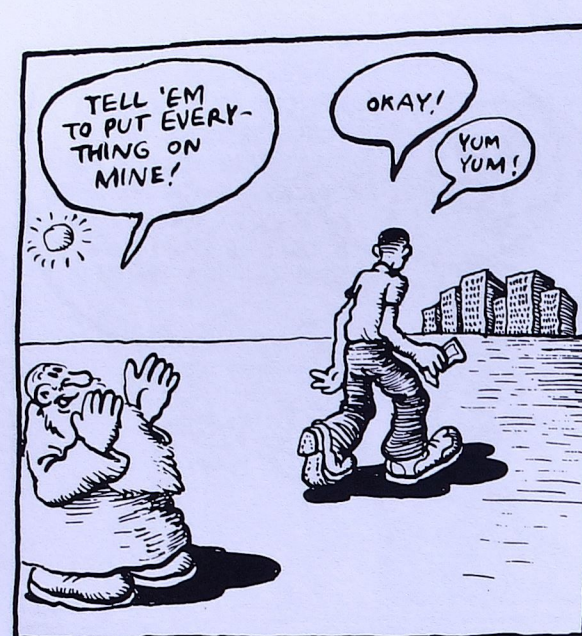
in Death Valley



THE GREAT MAN
(AN EX-TAXICAB DRIVER
FROM AFGHANISTAN)
HAS BEEN MEDITATING
IN THE DESERT
FOR FORTY DAYS!
HOW DOES HE DO IT!?



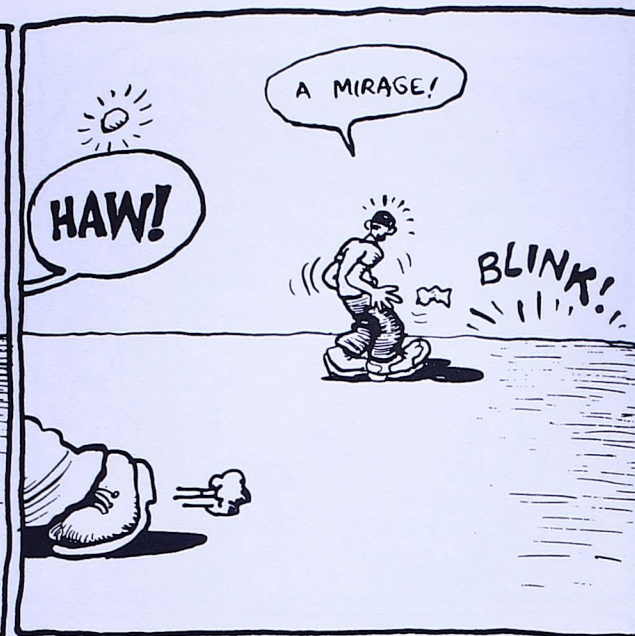




TELL 'EM
TO PUT EVERY-
THING ON
MINE!

OKAY!

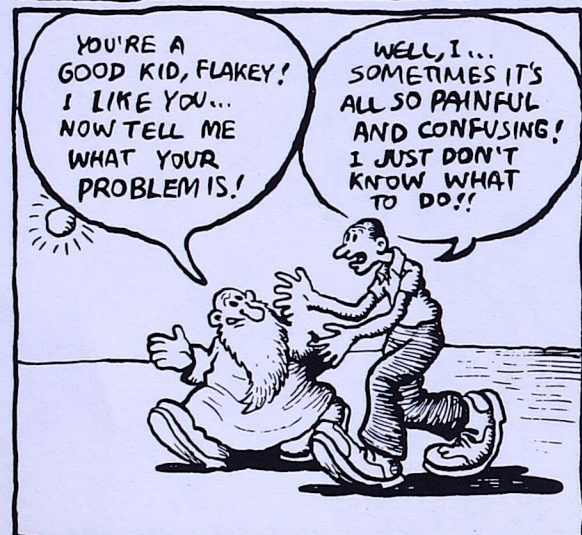
YUM
YUM!



A MIRAGE!

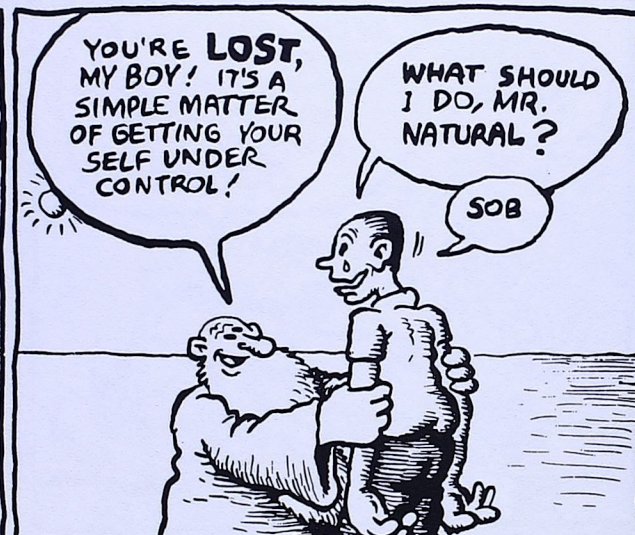
HAW!

BLINK!



YOU'RE A
GOOD KID, FLAKEY!
I LIKE YOU...
NOW TELL ME
WHAT YOUR
PROBLEM IS!

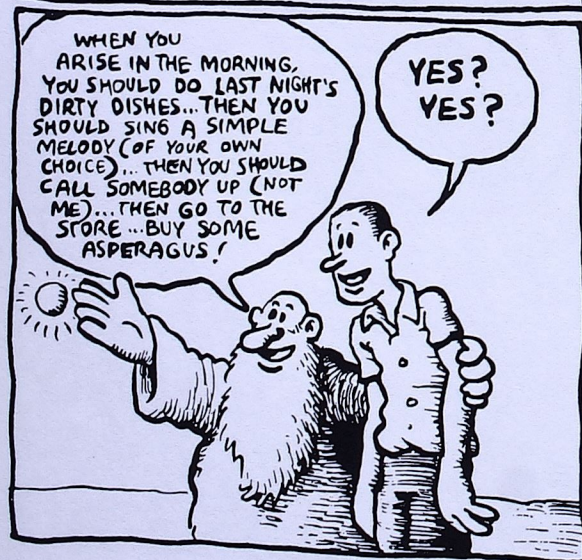
WELL, I...
SOMETIMES IT'S
ALL SO PAINFUL
AND CONFUSING!
I JUST DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO!!



YOU'RE LOST,
MY BOY! IT'S A
SIMPLE MATTER
OF GETTING YOUR
SELF UNDER
CONTROL!

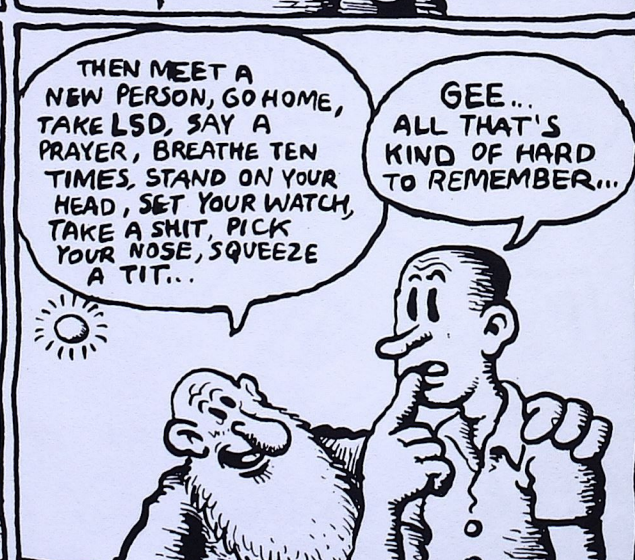
WHAT SHOULD
I DO, MR.
NATURAL?

SOB



WHEN YOU
ARISE IN THE MORNING,
YOU SHOULD DO LAST NIGHT'S
DIRTY DISHES... THEN YOU
SHOULD SING A SIMPLE
MELODY (OF YOUR OWN
CHOICE)... THEN YOU SHOULD
CALL SOMEBODY UP (NOT
ME)... THEN GO TO THE
STORE... BUY SOME
ASPERAGUS!

YES?
YES?



THEN MEET A
NEW PERSON, GO HOME,
TAKE LSD, SAY A
PRAYER, BREATHE TEN
TIMES, STAND ON YOUR
HEAD, SET YOUR WATCH,
TAKE A SHIT, PICK
YOUR NOSE, SQUEEZE
A TIT...

GEE...
ALL THAT'S
KIND OF HARD
TO REMEMBER...



TAKE IT
OR LEAVE
IT!

YEH...
RIGHT...



WHY DO I
KEEP THINKING
YOU CAN TELL
ME ANYTHING
?

I'LL BE
GODDAMN
IF I KNOW...
YOU HEADING
ON BACK?



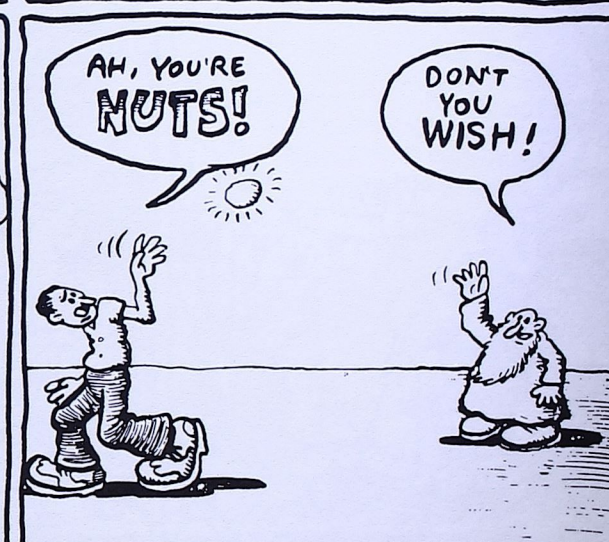
YOU'RE SO
INDEPENDENT!

AIN'T IT TH'
TRUTH? MAN,
I DIG IT!

I GROOVE
IN THIS
DESERT!

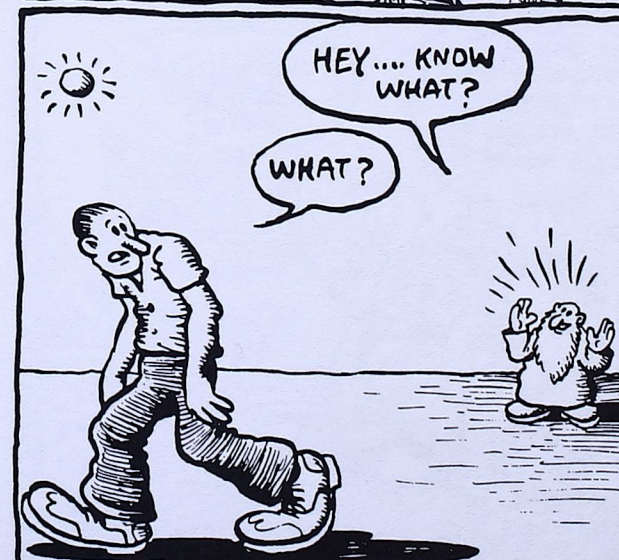
WOW!

SNAP
SNAP



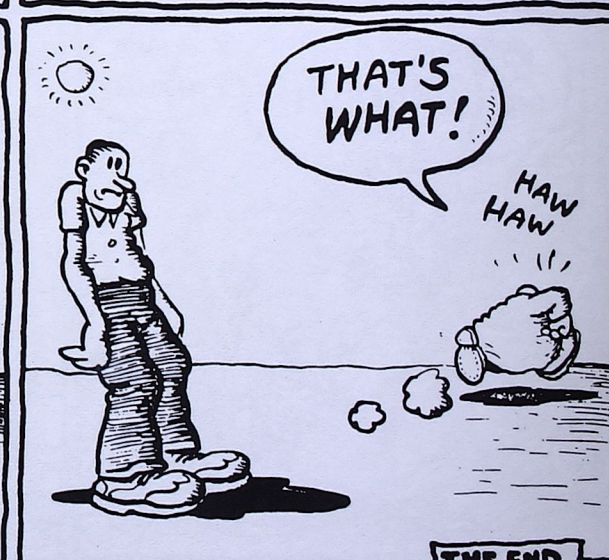
AH, YOU'RE
NUTS!

DON'T
YOU
WISH!



HEY... KNOW
WHAT?

WHAT?



THAT'S
WHAT!

HAW
HAW

THE END

Mr Natural

"visits the city"

YES, HE'S BACK IN TOWN... JUST TO SEE ALL HIS OLD FRIENDS WHO ARE STILL AROUND. MAYBE HE'LL EVEN DROP IN ON YOU!

NOT AT ALL, MY BOY!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE WONDERING WHY I ASKED YOU TO COME OVER TONIGHT...

YOU WANT TO SIT AROUND AND TALK ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS. WE WILL PROCEED TO FILL THOUSANDS OF DIALOGUE BALLOONS SQUABBLING OVER YOUR NEVER-ENDING -

...OH NEVERMIND! YOU'RE WORKING YOURSELF INTO A SNIT ALREADY!

MY NEVER-ENDING WHAT, WISE GUY??

QUEST INTO THE UNKNOWN!

IS THAT SO TERRIBLE?

OF COURSE NOT... USED TO DO IT MYSELF... SAY, ARE YOU ON ACID AGAIN?

ER... WELL... YES... HOW'D YOU KNOW?

OH, I CAN TELL... I HAVE MY WAYS!

I'LL BET! I'M WELL AWARE THAT YOU CAN READ MY THOUGHTS... SOMETIMES IT SCARES ME!

HIDING SOMETHING PERHAPS? HMMM

YOUR SEX PROBLEM MUST BE BOTHERING YOU AGAIN!

OH GOD!

...I FREAK OUT EVERYTIME YOU BRING UP THAT... SEX BUSINESS... IT'S ALL SO... SO...

I KNOW... MESSY! COMPLICATED... CONFUSING... BUT LOOK!

WHATEVER IT IS THAT'S HAPPENING, IT KEEPS ON HAPPENING NO MATTER WHAT! RIGHT?

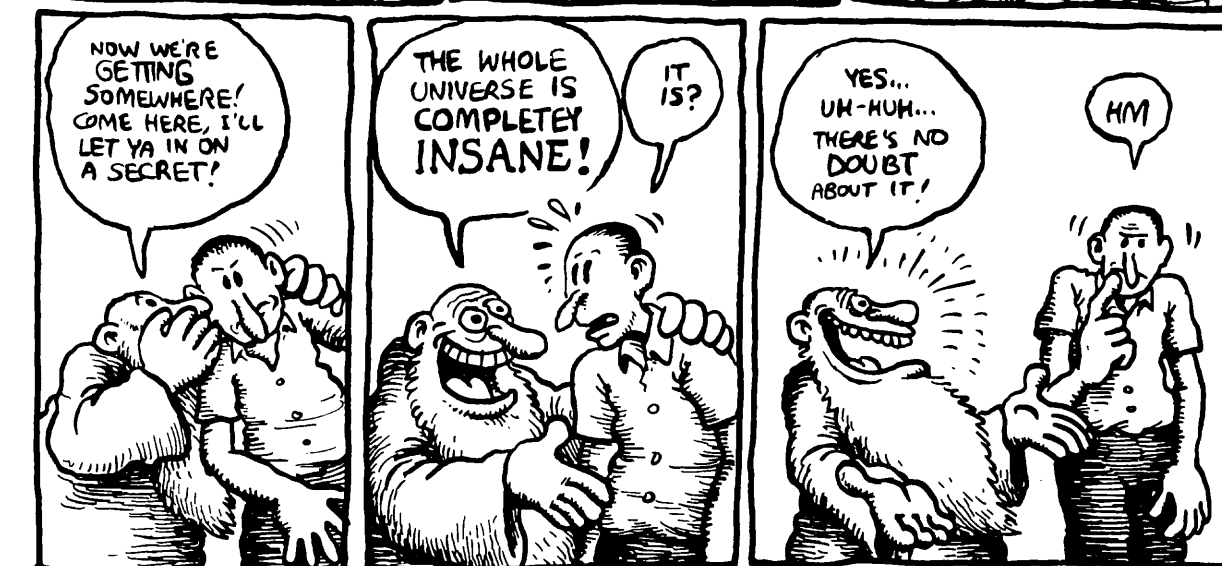
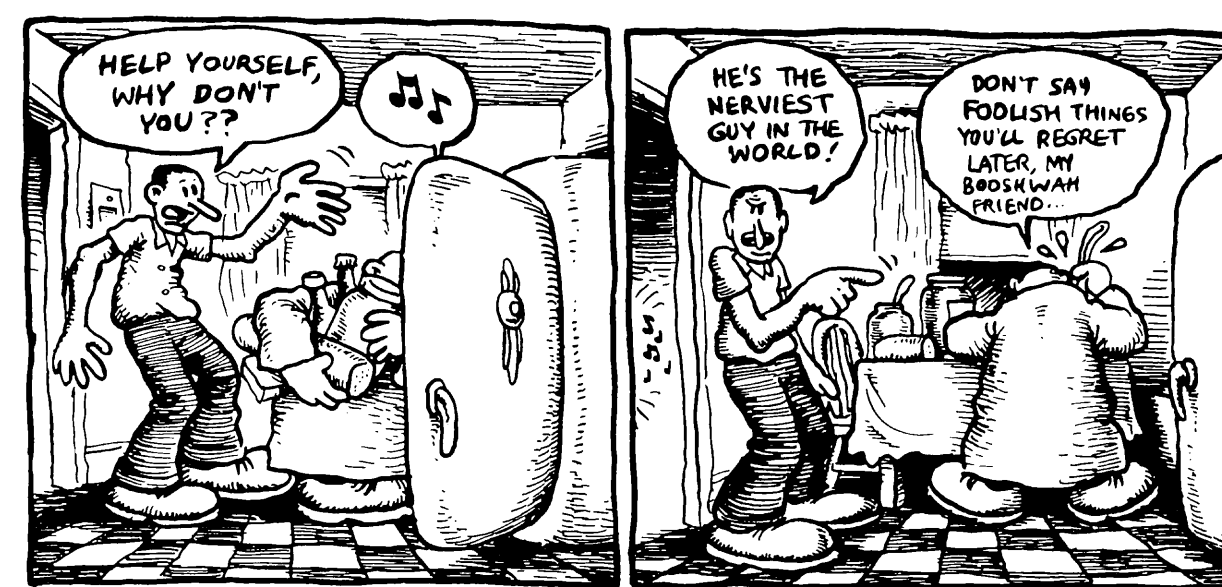
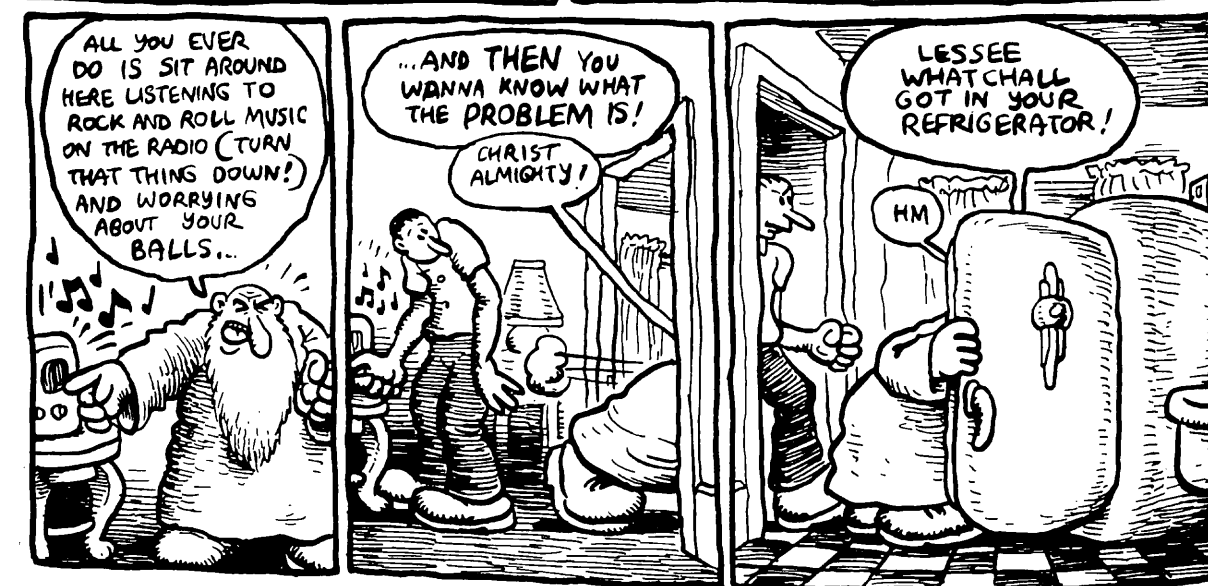
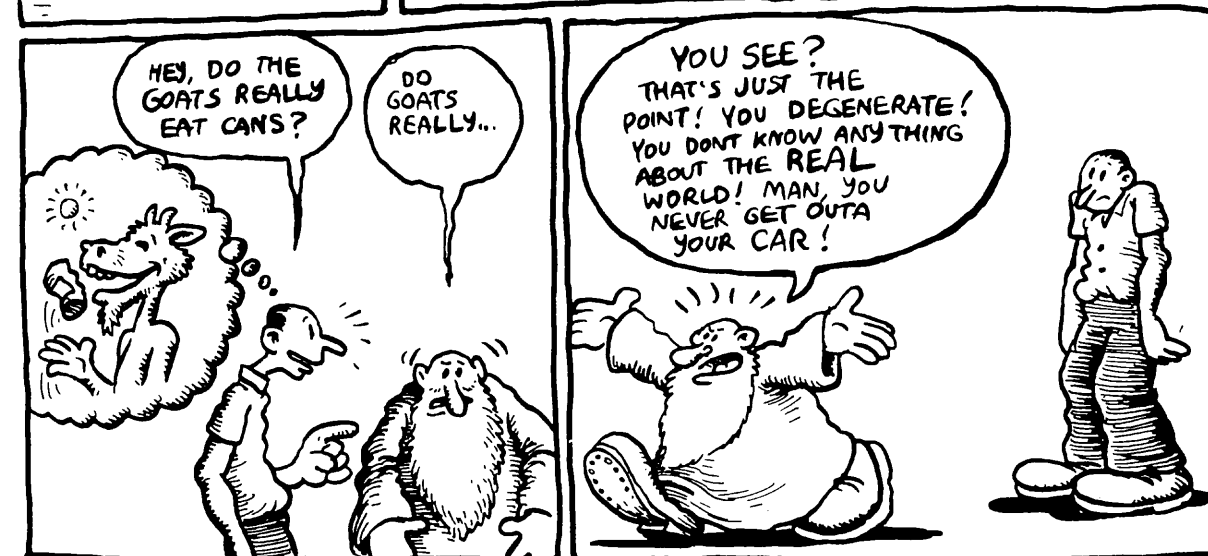
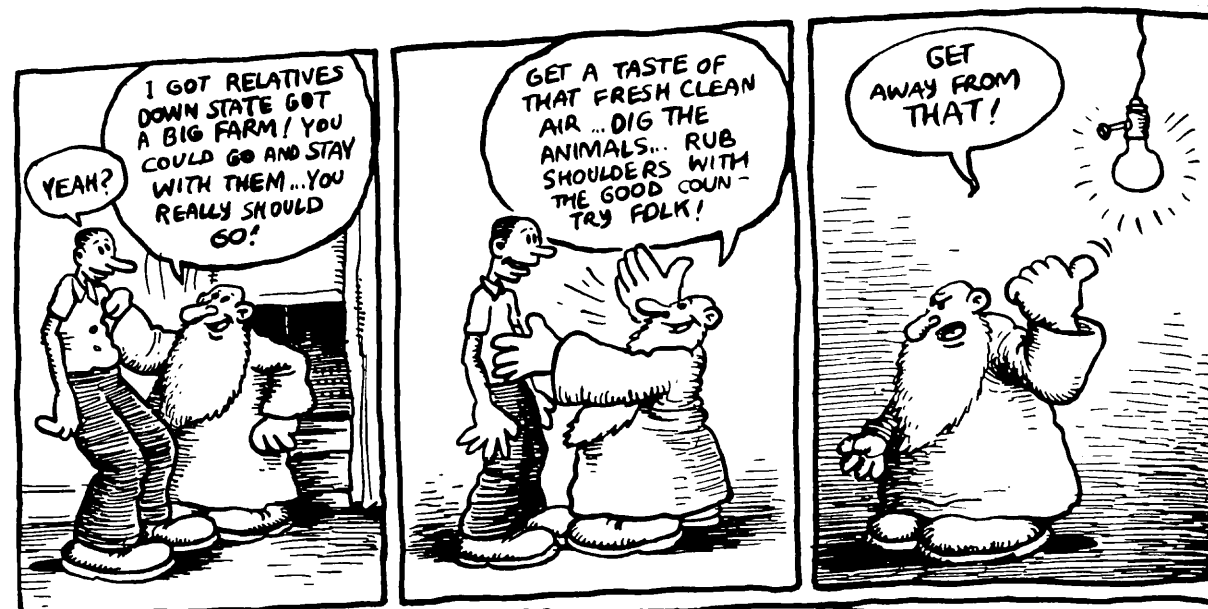
WOW! YES! THAT'S EXACTLY -

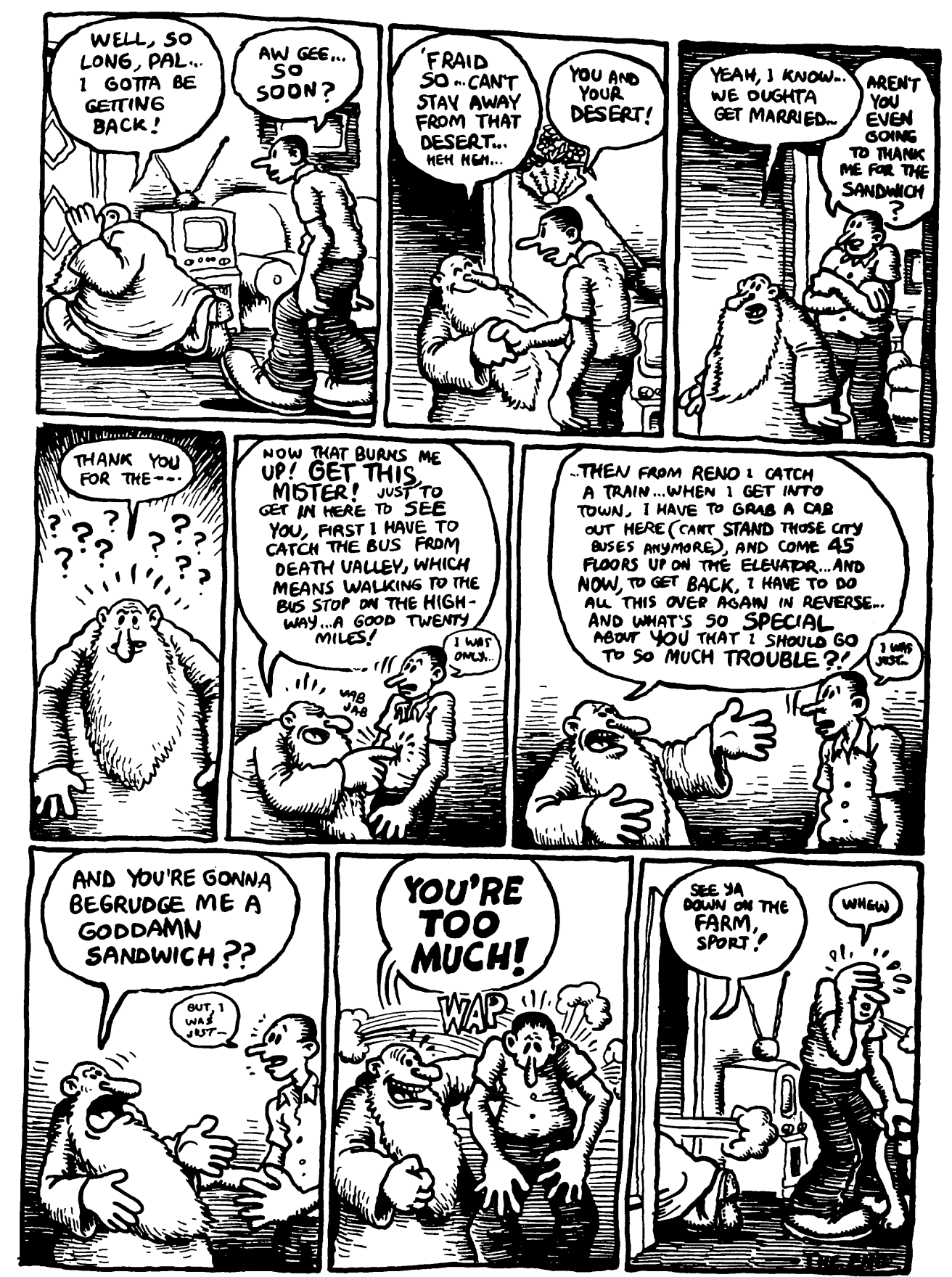
IT'S LIKE... I MEAN... YOU...

LOST IT AGAIN!

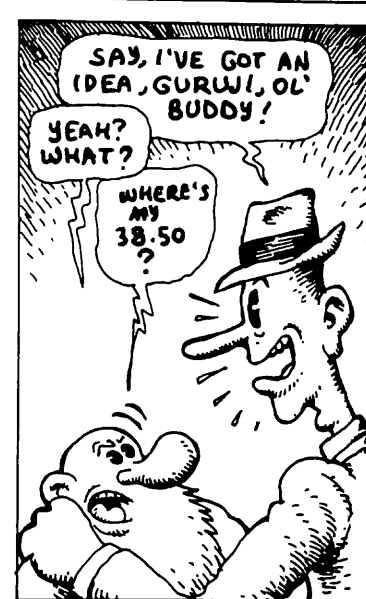
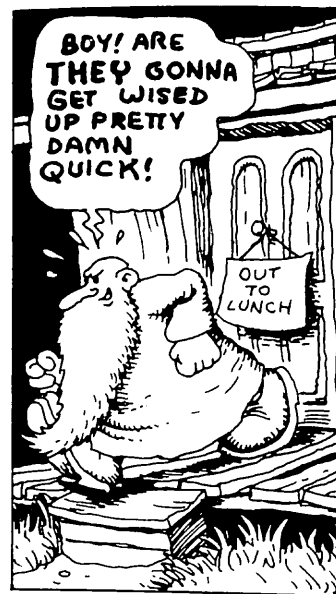
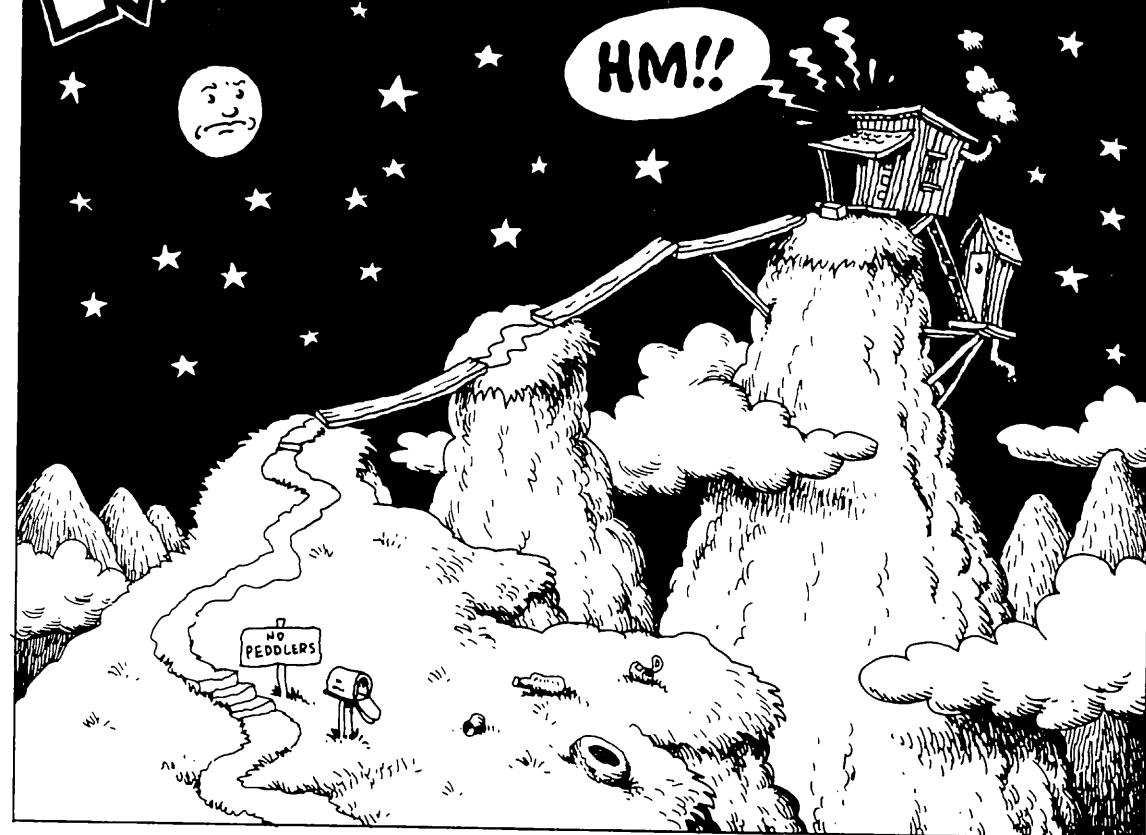
YOU CITY PEOPLE ARE ALL THE SAME... TELL YOU WHAT, FLAKEY FOOT.

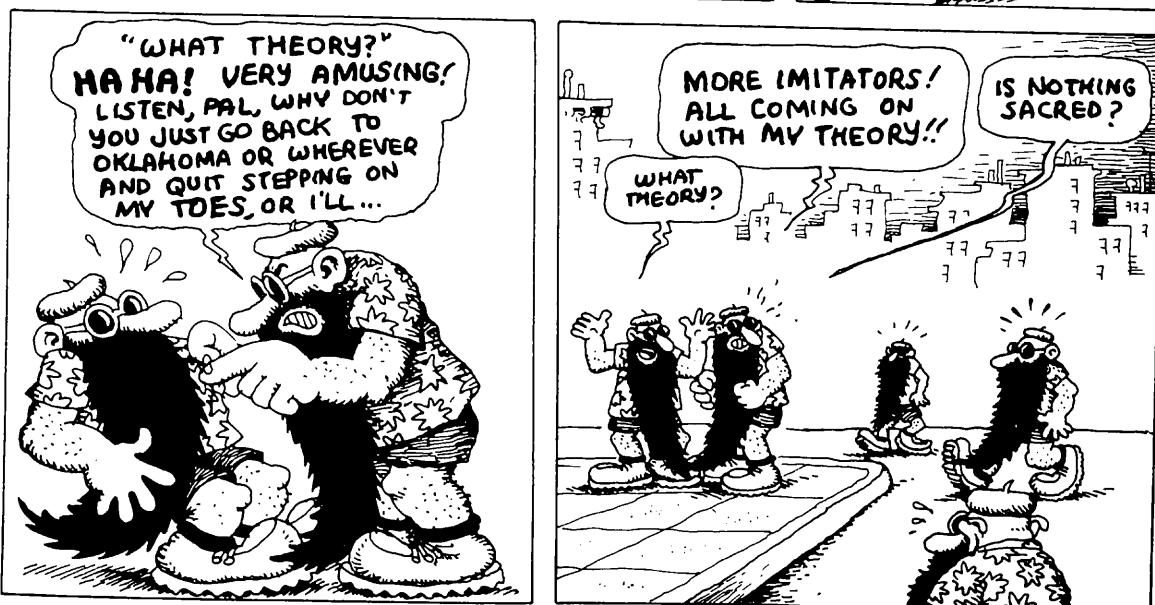
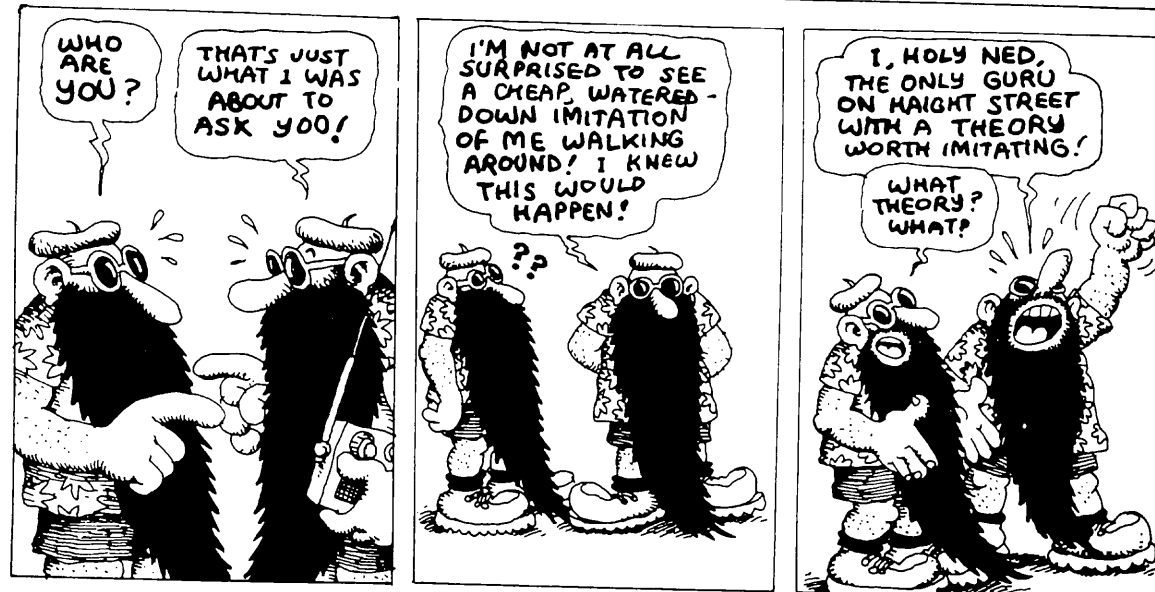
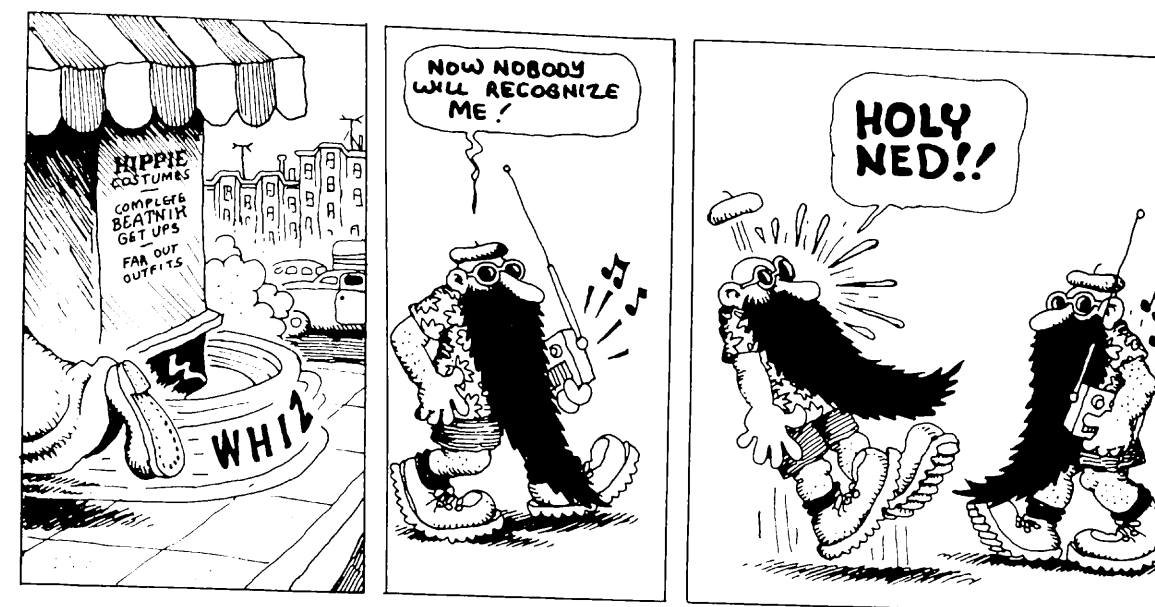
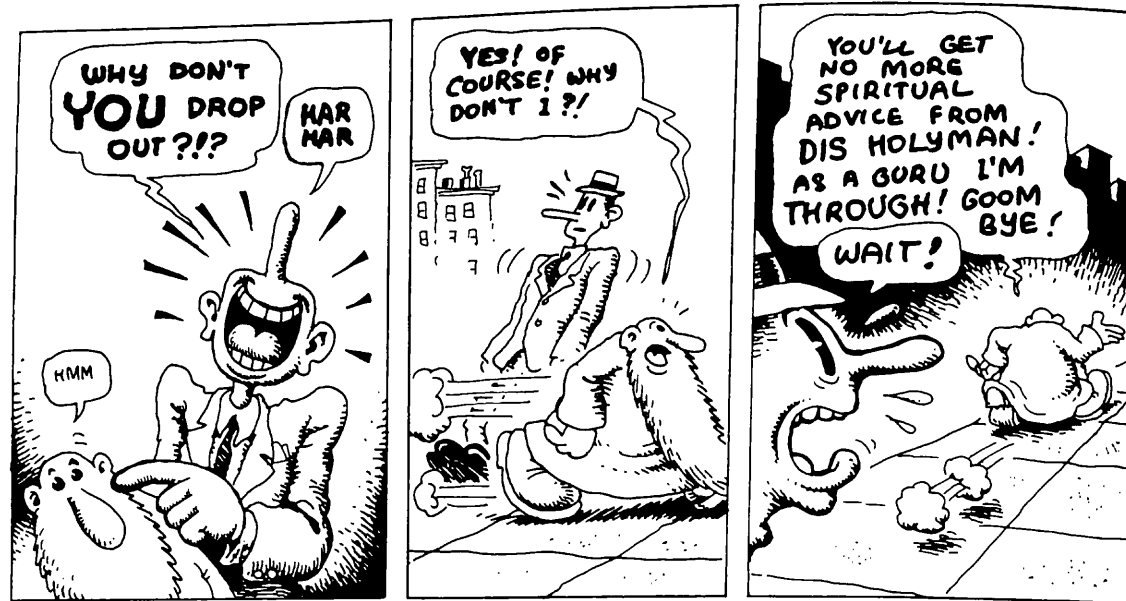
WHAT?

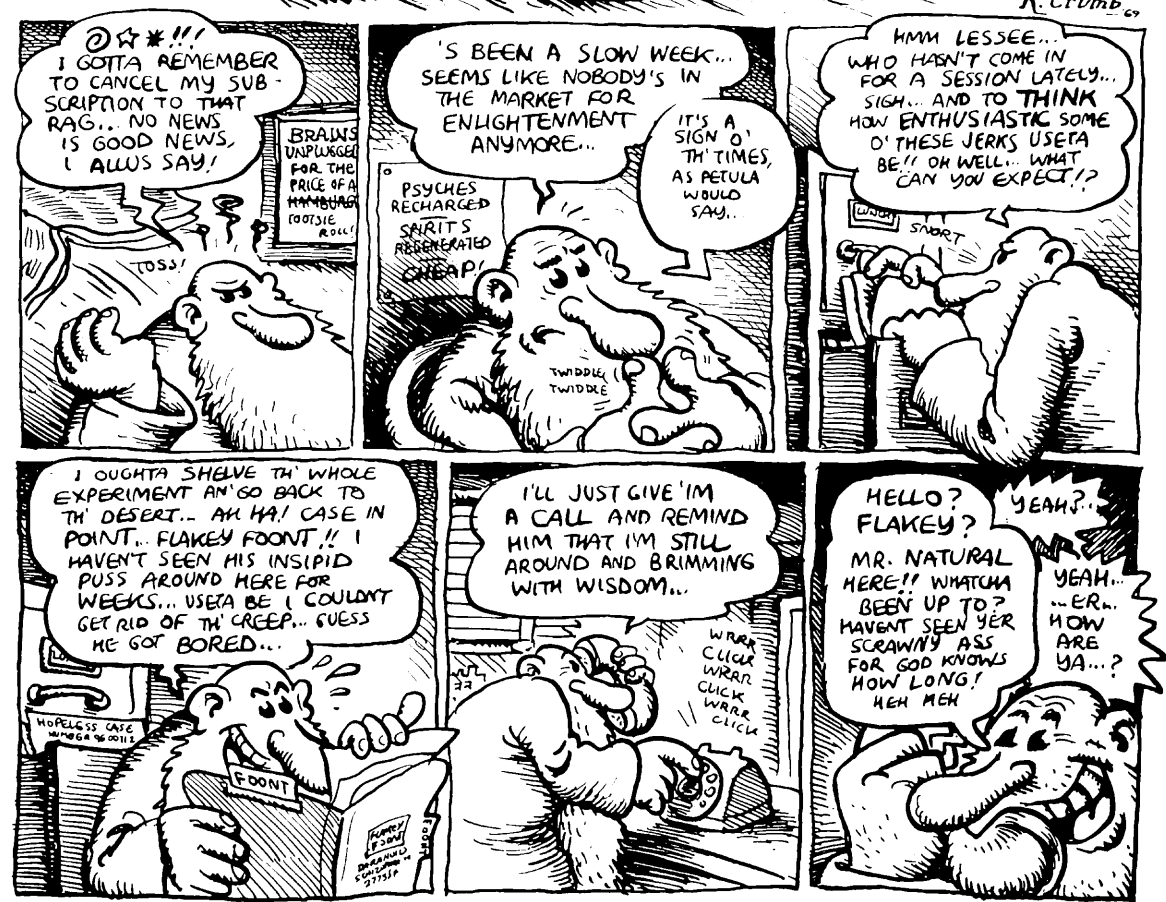
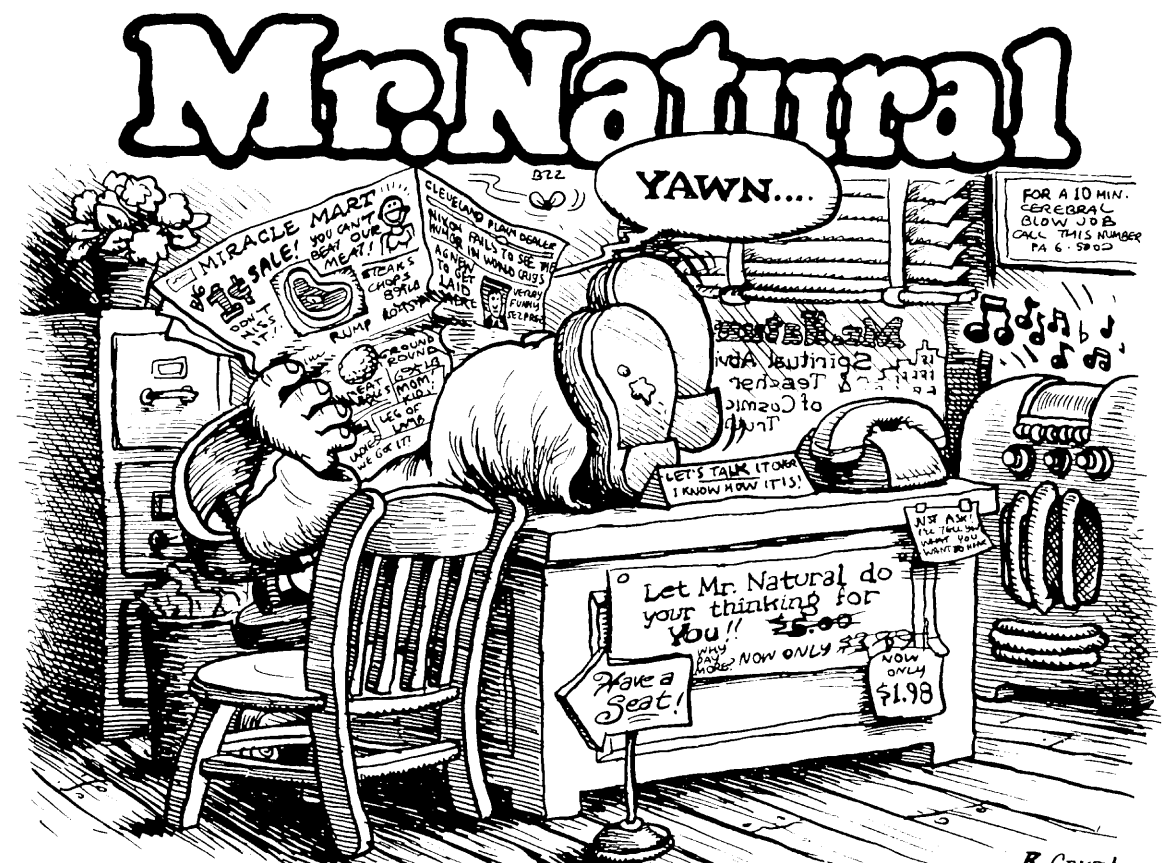




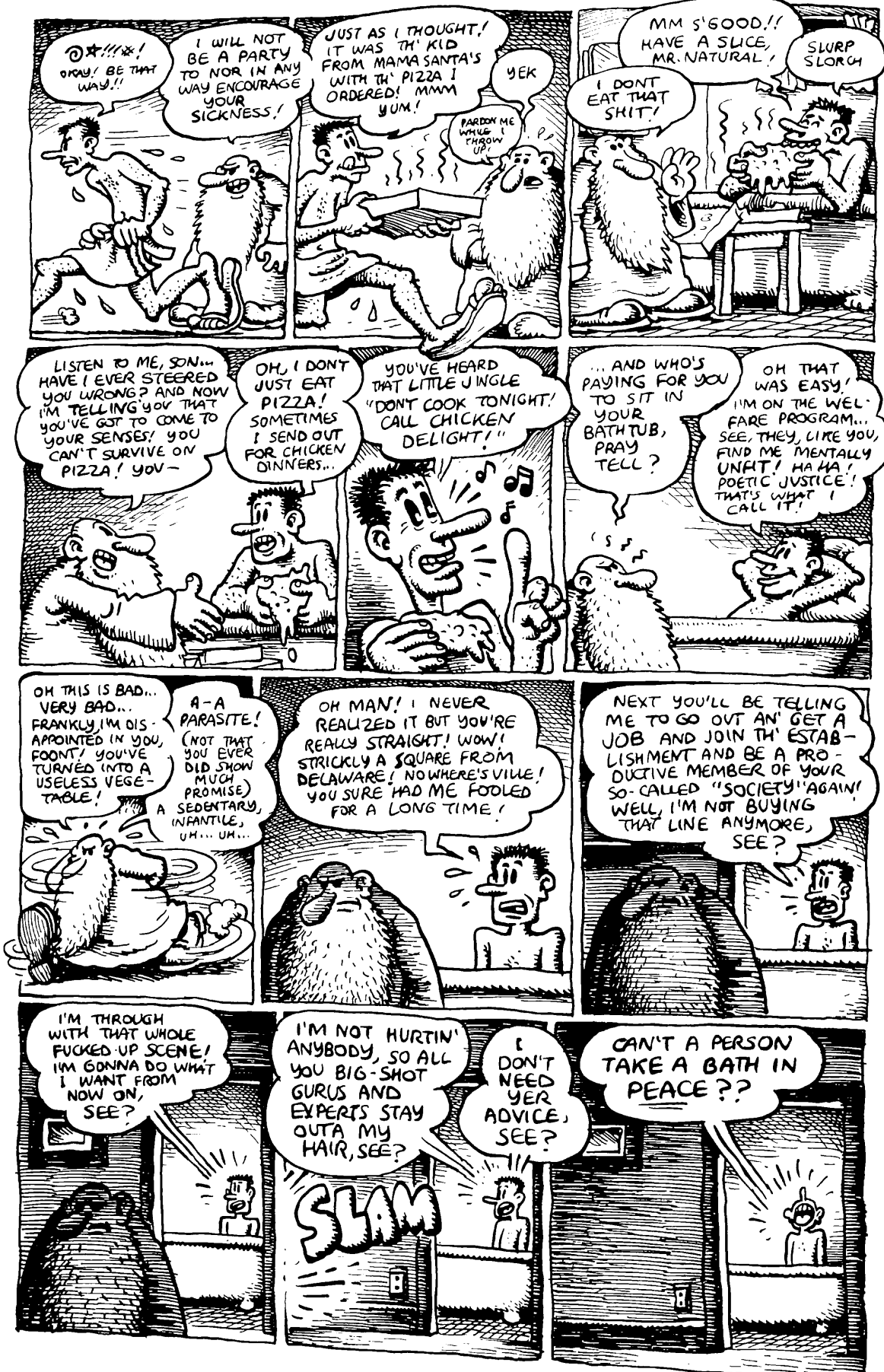
MR. NATURAL







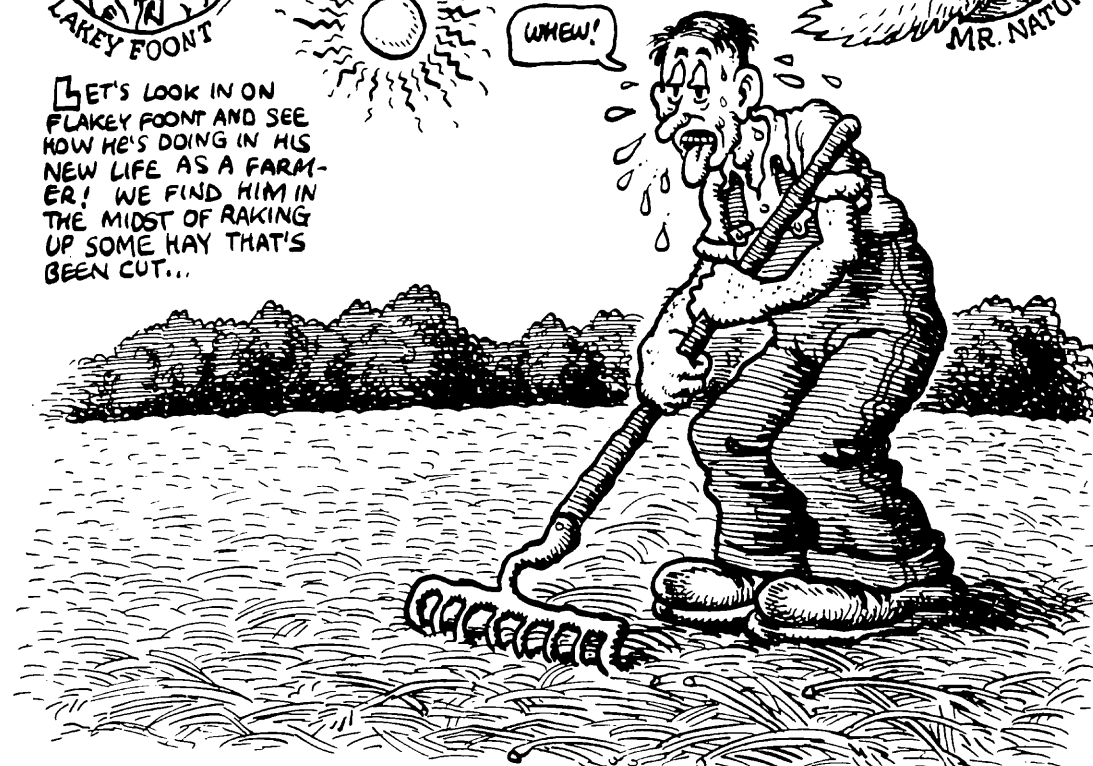




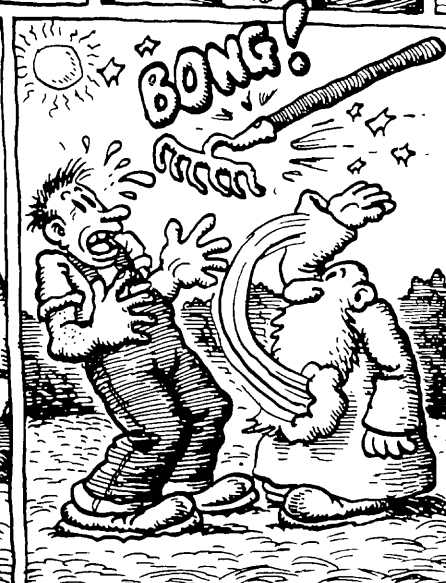
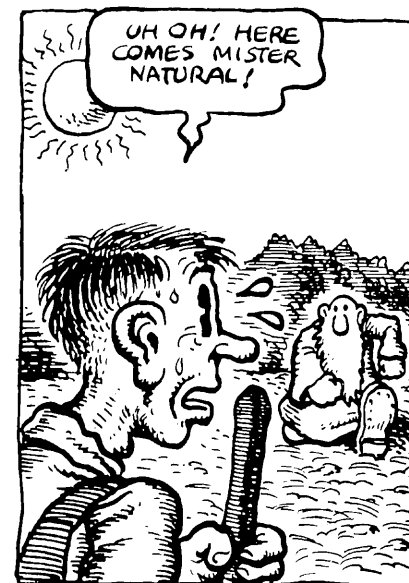
HEY! GUESS WHAT?
IT'S A
**WORKADAY
WORLD**



LET'S LOOK IN ON
FLAKEY FOONT AND SEE
HOW HE'S DOING IN HIS
NEW LIFE AS A FARM-
ER! WE FIND HIM IN
THE MIDST OF RAKING
UP SOME HAY THAT'S
BEEN CUT...

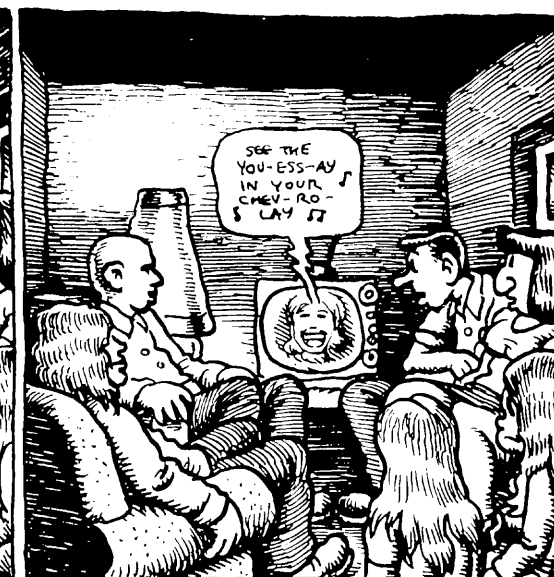


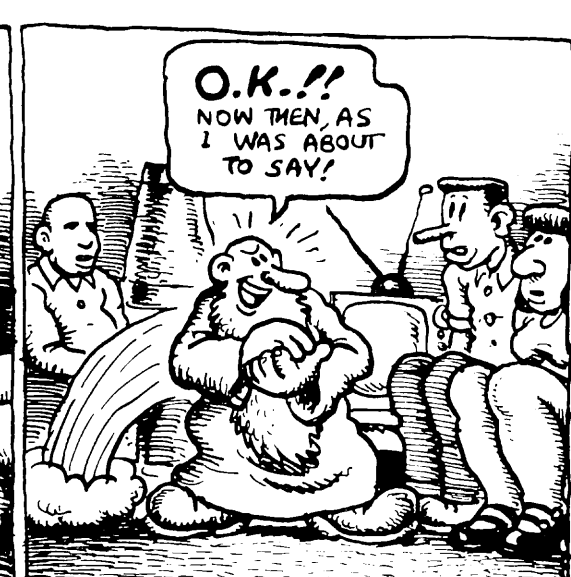
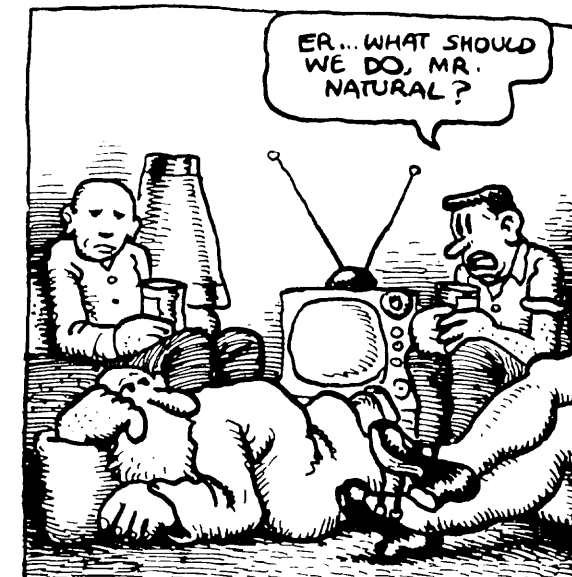
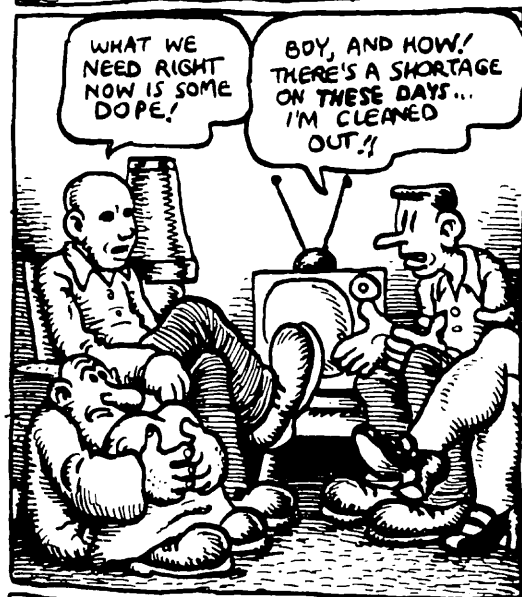
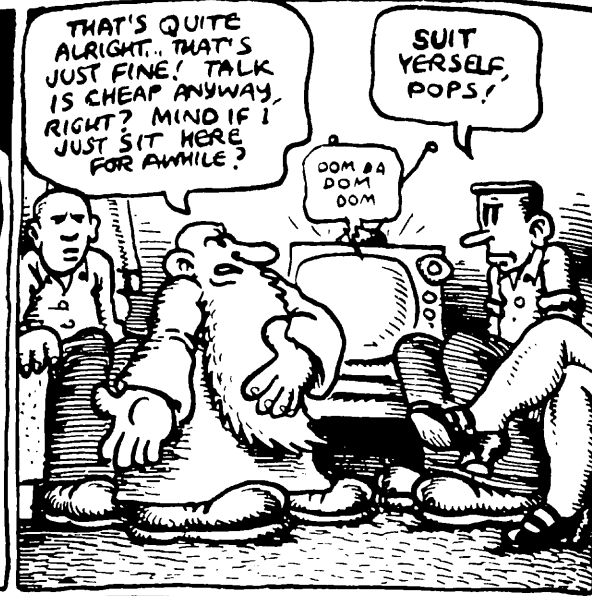
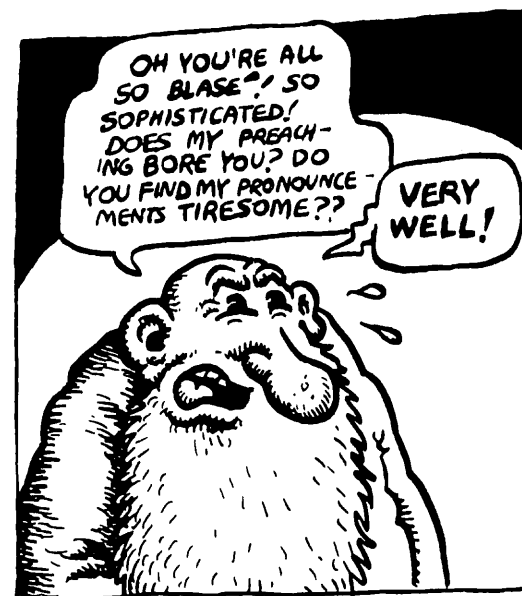
©1970 BY THAT OLD WORKING STIFF, R. CRUMB

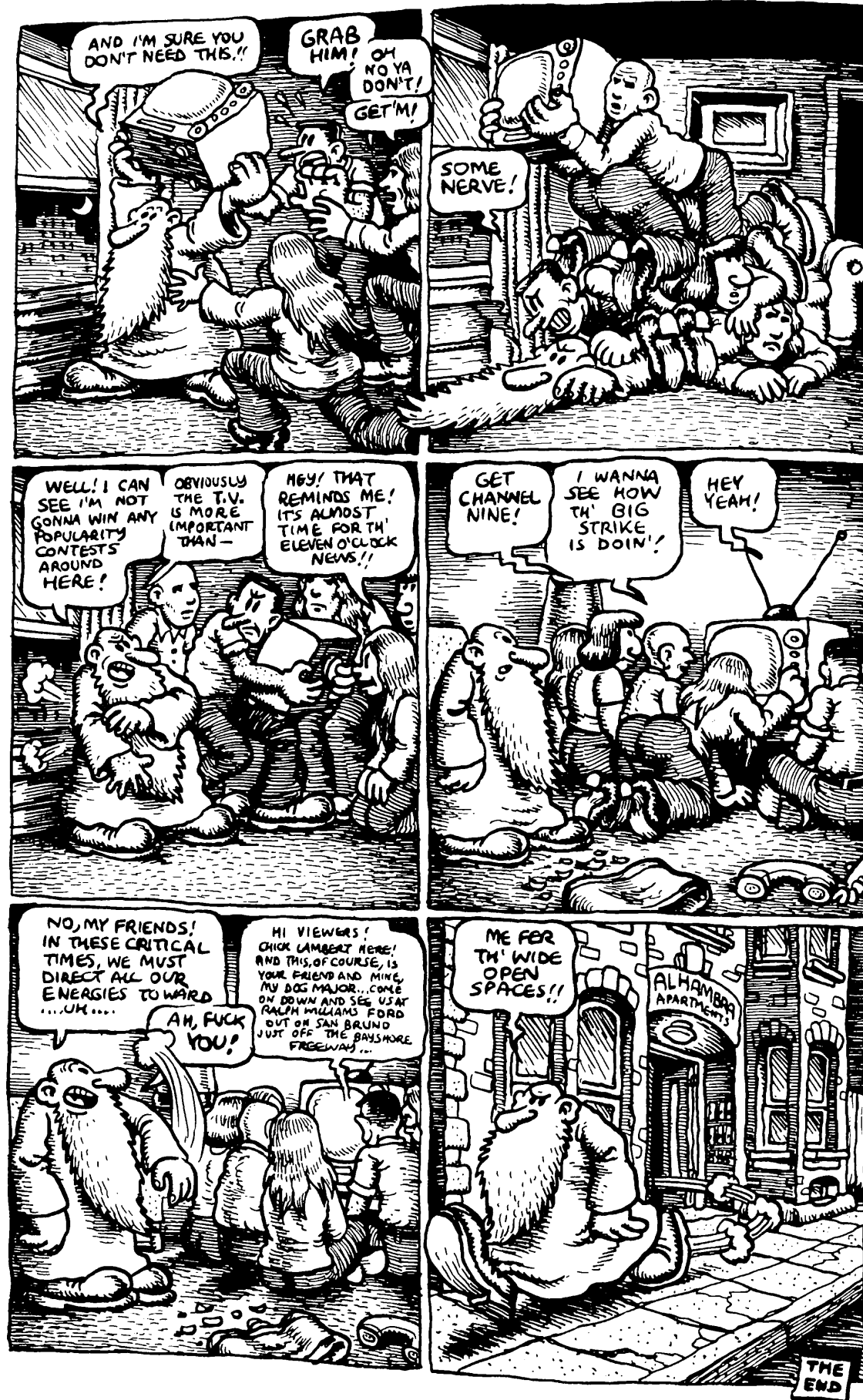


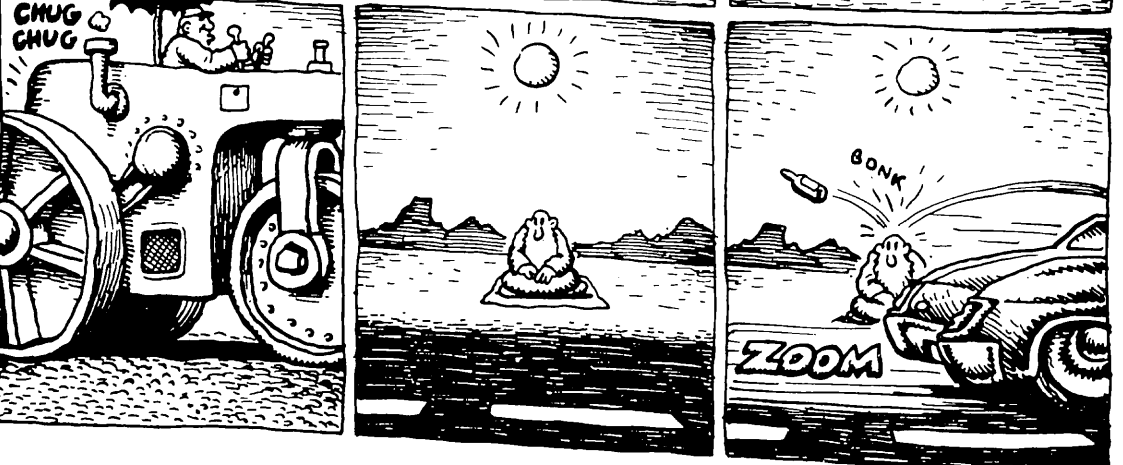
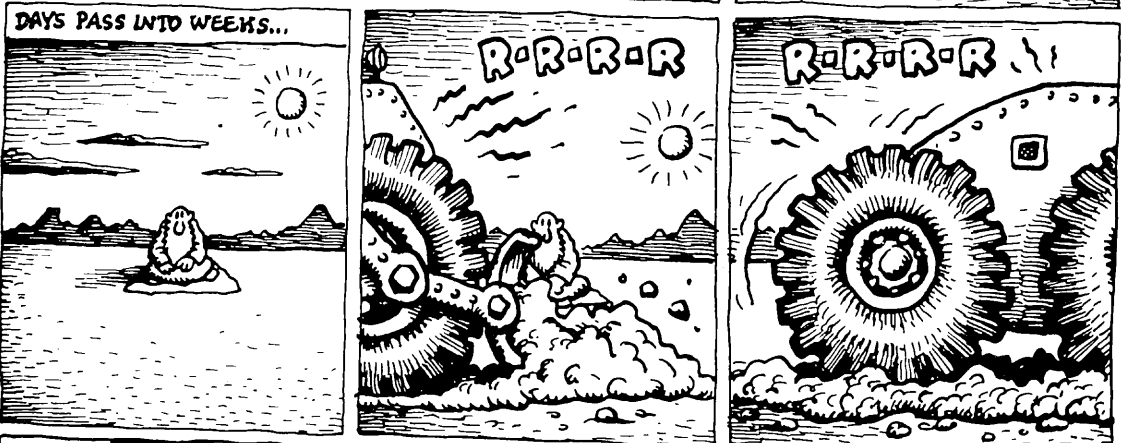
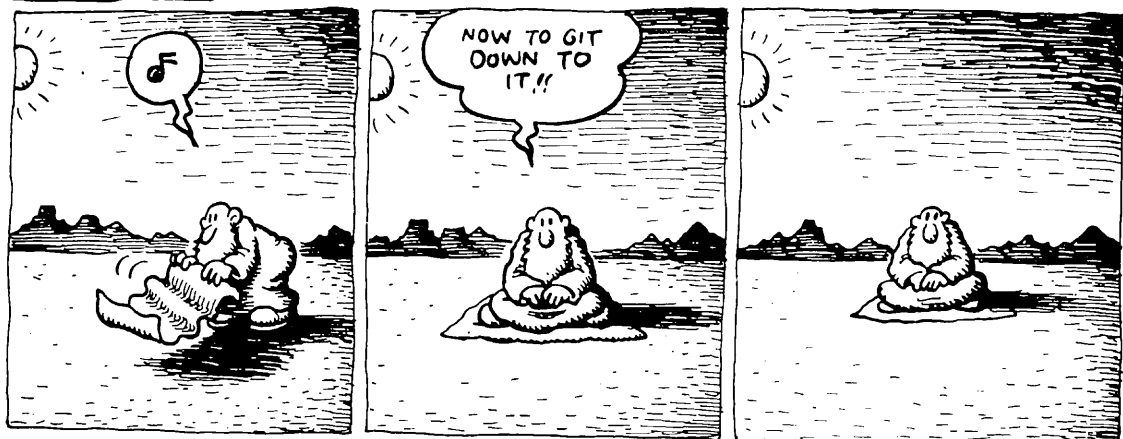
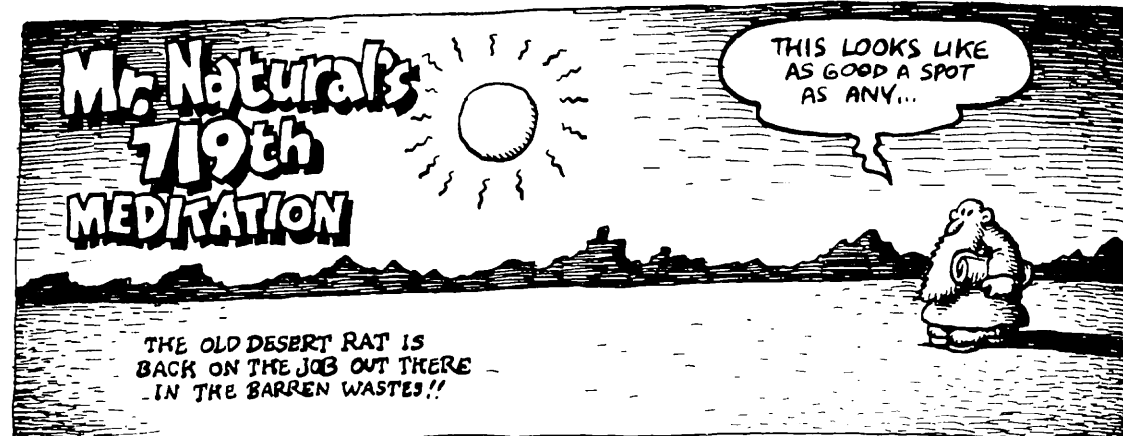
HERE'S A HANDY HINT FROM
MISTER NATCH:
AT HOME OR
AT WORK...

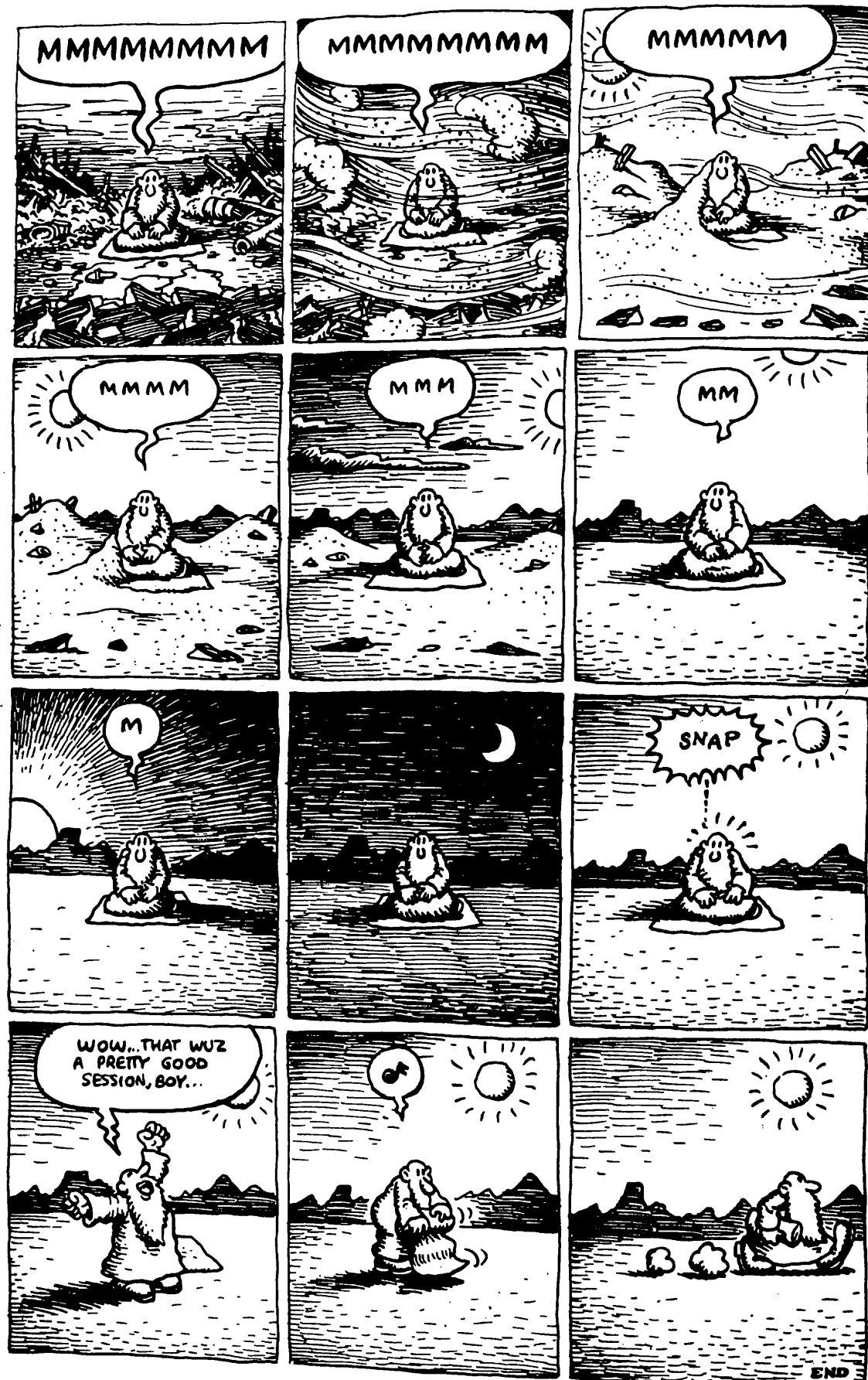












MR. NATURAL and SHUMAN the HUMAN in "OM SWEET OM"







The Origins of MR. NATURAL



THIS TINY BATTERED PHOTOGRAPH MAY BE THE FIRST ONE EVER TAKEN OF MR. NATURAL, BUT THE EXPERTS HAVE DIFFERENT OPINIONS. BACK OF PHOTO IS INSCRIBED WITH THE NAME "FRED" BUT IS NOT MR. NATURAL'S HANDWRITING.



EARLIEST KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH THAT IS DEFINITELY THE VENERABLE ONE IS THIS PORTRAIT SIGNED "F. NATURAL," WESSINGTON SPRINGS, S.D., 1908. HANDWRITING EXPERTS HAVE VERIFIED THE SIGNATURE, AND AN OLD-TIMER STILL LIVING IN ALCESTER, SOUTH DAKOTA, RECALLS A MAN NAMED FRED NATURAL WHO JOBBED AROUND THAT AREA IN THOSE DAYS. HE REMEMBERS HIM AS A "NICE QUIET FELLOW."

MANY OF YOU Mr. Natural fans have asked that we run an article on the man's past life and early background. Certainly a life history on Mr. Natural is a fascinating idea, and so, with a certain amount of skepticism, we set about investigating. Our doubts were confirmed as we ran in to one blind alley after another, and finally were forced to abandon trying to fill in several large gaps in his past. Whole decades, in fact, are entirely missing. A frustrating experience for the conscientious historian and Mr. Natural enthusiast.

His childhood is completely clouded in obscurity. His birthplace and birthdate are entirely unknown. No records have been found, and no relatives, and, of course, no one has been able to squeeze an ounce of information out of the Old Man Himself (except, according to him, that his father is still alive and well, but he won't tell us where). All knowledge of his life has been gathered without his help or support, and the whole

project leaves him "Cold," as he puts it.

The 1908 photograph is the earliest proof we have of his existence. The photo was sent to us by Mrs. Ada Cooper, a Mr. Natural fan, who found the old picture in a trunk full of her mother's belongings. Mrs. Cooper says she can never remember her mother, now deceased, ever mentioning that she knew Mr. Natural.

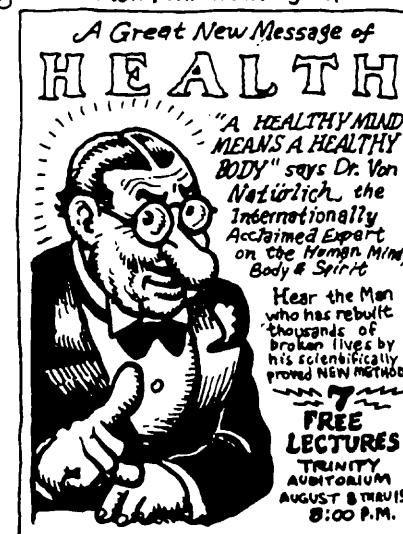
As for his age at the time the photograph was taken, he appears to have been between thirty-five and forty, which would make him close to one hundred years old today!!

Not a clue exists as to his whereabouts between 1908 and 1921, the year our wild young wiseman moved to Chicago, where he stayed up to 1929. Here we lose track of the elusive Sage for another seven years. But we managed to hunt down several people who knew him in that toddlin' town in the twenties, and so have gathered a fairly complete picture of Mr. Natural's adventures through that lurid decade.

In the fall of 1921 Mr. Natural got a job in a drugstore as an errand runner on the near north side. (Some believe the drugstore was a front for a speak-easy and that it was Natch's job to deliver

the illegal booze to thirsty customers, but this is mere here-say). It may have been while in the employ of this pharmacy that he became interested in the drug field, for two years later, in 1923, he was promoting a "Wonder Drug" that he claimed could cure all "mental and spiritual ills" and had a small but enthusiastic cult of followers, mostly women, who endorsed this claim vigorously. Going under the name of "Dr. Von Natürlich," he travelled through the midwest for a short time, selling the "wonder elixir" and "healing" the sick, until he was arrested in Peoria, Illinois, convicted of fraud and spent six months in the county jail. There are still those who applaud Dr. Von Natürlich's Wonder Drug, and curse the day his entire stock was confiscated by the police. Mrs. Vicki Hodgetts, now of Los Angeles, said to me when I talked with her: "Well, yes! It certainly was a wonder drug! I know it was, because I was absolutely neurotic! I was miserable, believe me! Then along comes this Dr. Von Natürlich... and... well, I've been a very happy person ever since!!"

The police file on the case, which was still in the Peoria Courthouse, states, "Although purported to possess potent powers over the mind and spirit, a close scrutiny of this so-called 'Wonder Drug' under a microscope has proven without a shadow of a doubt that it is nothing more than plain ordinary tap-water."



HANDBILL SHOWING "DR. VON NATÜRLICH" IN THE YEAR 1924

After his release from jail, he turned his talents to magic, and for a few months performed his feats of mystic hoodoo in Vaudeville houses around Chicago. He was billed as Mr. Natural the Magnificent. This career, too, met with opposition from the conservatives of that primitive time, and his show was cut short one night by a panic-stricken theatre manager who ordered the curtain brought down on Mr. Natural's "Unnatural Act" which he was about to perform on an hypnotized lady participant. He was blacklisted and never performed as a magician again.

Evidently, he was undaunted by past defeats, and in the spring of 1926 he somehow managed to get together a small dance band and began a successful career in the music business as a band-leader.

This band was known as "Mr. Natural and his Seven Lyrical Lechers" at first and later the group was enlarged to thirteen members under the name of "Mr. Natural's Lyrical Lechers and their Orchestra." They were a popular group around Chicago for almost two years, playing in roadhouses and cafes, and an occasional College Prom or Hotel Ballroom. Mr. Natural himself wrote many of the songs in their repertoire and even played an assortment of unlikely instruments. Their arrangements had a strangely unique sound as evidenced by a few surviving records.



TWO RECORDS CUT BY MR. NATURAL'S BAND IN THE SUMMER OF 1928



It was an era of easy money and within a year, Mr. Natural had accumulated a small fortune. In 1928 he was living in a large plush home in a Chicago suburb, owned two Packard limousines, employed the services of a maid, butler and chauffeur and threw huge wild parties.

Then, suddenly, and unexpectedly, he gave it all away to some bum he'd picked up on the street, typical of the restless, unfathomable nature of his perfect being. His friends were totally baffled by this sudden change, and when he moved to a cheap skid-row hotel, he gradually lost contact with his former well-to-do whoopee-making friends.

Harry Baines, the drummer in the band, says "We had some good times back then. I'll never understand why Natchy threw it all away. Everybody thought he was nuts! Of course, two years later, the rest of us went down the tubes along with him!"

"It looked to me like he just flipped his noodle!" - Joey Norton, banjo player in the group. "I still can't figure it! I used to think he was a smart operator 'til he pulled that stunt! And he even had it put in writing! Crackers!" - Doris Hall, wife of Cafe owner Monte Hall.

From the winter of '28-'29, when Mr. Natural moved to skid-row, until a full seven years later, nothing is known of him.



THIS PHOTOGRAPH, MADE IN DEC., 1933, CONTAINS A PERSON WHO MIGHT BE MR. NATURAL, ACCORDING TO THE SAN MATED CHAPTER OF THE MR. NATURAL SOCIETY, WHO FOUND THE PICTURE. "WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?" SAYS THE GROUP'S PRESIDENT. INDEED, THERE IS A STRONG RESEMBLANCE IN THE FEATURES OF THE DOWN-AND-OUT CHAP ABOVE TO THOSE OF THE LIVING SAINT. PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN CHICAGO, BUT NO ONE HAS TURNED UP WHO KNEW HIM THERE AFTER 1929.

In 1936 he popped up again on the west coast, where he met another great American folk hero and all-around geek, the "Old Pooperoo". The Old Pooperoo was working as a fruit picker in Central California in the late thirties, and he and Mr. Natural crossed paths in a working-man's bar in Modesto one night in October, 1936. They became close friends and traveled together, picking up a few dollars now and then working in the fields or on construction jobs, getting drunk and whoring and hopping freight cars all over the United States.

"Natural was a good ol' boy, yep... we went through plenty of troubles together, you bet! Why, we musta been in every calaboose in this land of Liberty, from Maine to California and back again! We fought about women and cried on each other's shoulder over lost romances... we talked about old times back home for hours, an' when we had a few bucks we lived like royal Turks! But they was generally tough times, so I got in with some sharpies in Philly and for awhile there I was rakin' it in. This was around '39 or '40. I didn't see Natural much after that. I guess I got too Booshwah fer him. He wuz uneasy around my business associates. I s'pose we did put on some airs... haw haw... strictly high-hat! So he got bored and headed back west an' I didn't see him again, liked I said. But I started hearing stories about him gettin' in with small-time crooks an' dope fiends, so I sent him some cash to come east an' get in the business with me, but of course he just spent the money and

THE OLD POOPEROO AND MR. NATURAL IN CHEYENNE, WYOMING, 1938



wrote askin me for more and more til I got fed up and wouldn't send him any. I figured he was Hell-bent on a dead-end course. Last I heard, he wuz runnin around with a tough twerp from Tulsa name of Judy Holiday... not th' same one as th' movie star, but a nice lookin' dish from what I heard." No one seems to know what became of this Tulsa sweetheart.

When the War broke out Mr. Natural once again vanished from the scene. He has talked vaguely of this period of his life, but will not give us any specific details (He claims he can't remember). By his own admission, if we can trust him, he was in the Middle and Far East through the war years and after. He says he was in India, traveled to China, the Himalayas, Tibet and Afghanistan, where he got work as a Taxi driver, and, in his own words "learned many strange and wonderful things" in those distant lands.

He returned to America in 1953 "for some stupid reason" and loafed around for a year "getting very depressed about the world situation," he tells us, and so, renouncing all worldly pursuits and pleasures, he retreated to Death Valley in 1955 to "start anew."

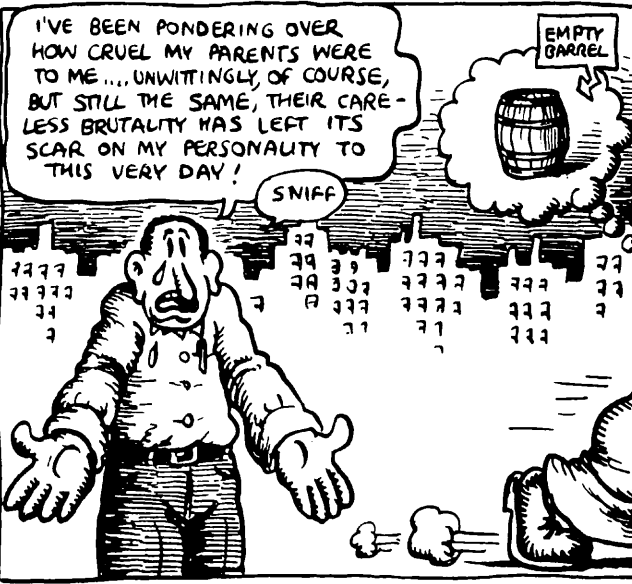
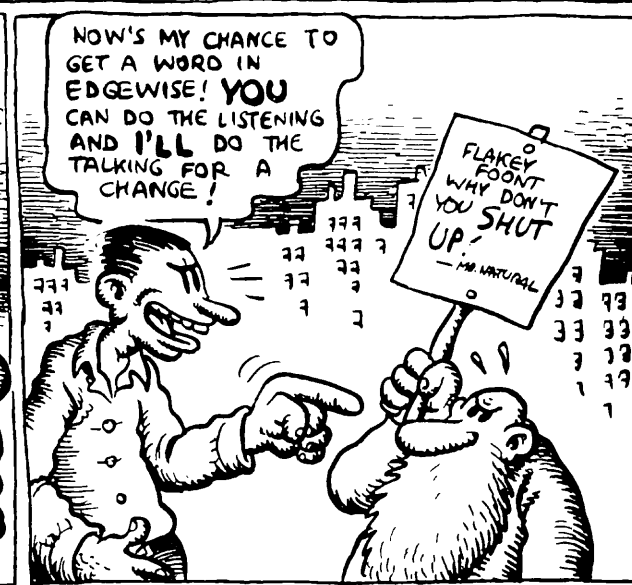
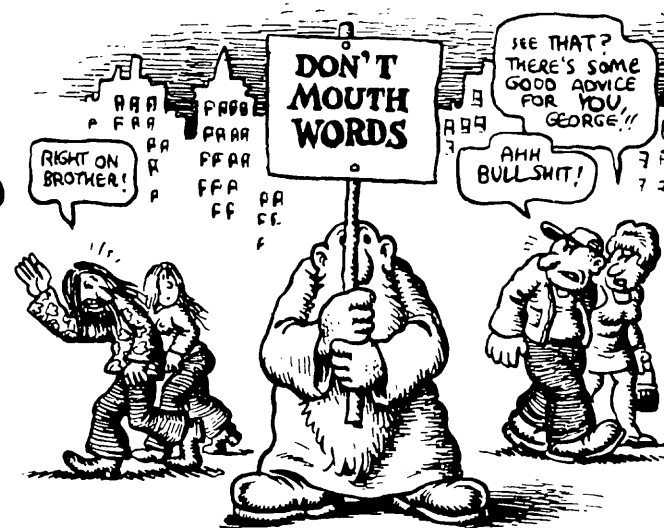
In June, 1960, a small group of ardent devotees formed the first chapter of the Mr. Natural Fan Clubs of America in Southern California. They kept close ties with his spiritual development in the desert, as well as looking after his financial matters. In 1965 he began making speaking tours, visiting Colleges and Universities, and by 1966 he was already coming into his own as a recognized powerful spiritual force on this planet, a great religious leader, and a living model of Godlike perfection for all of Humanity to emulate. His moving words of wisdom have been translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian, Norwegian, Dutch and Japanese, and his presence on this globe has changed it for the better, as we all know!!

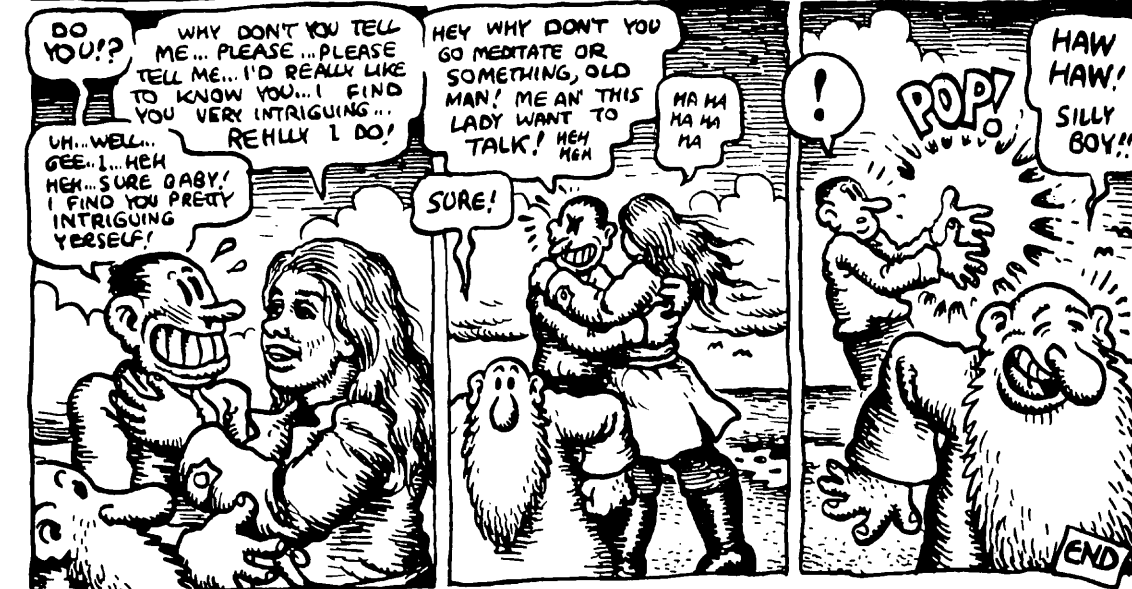
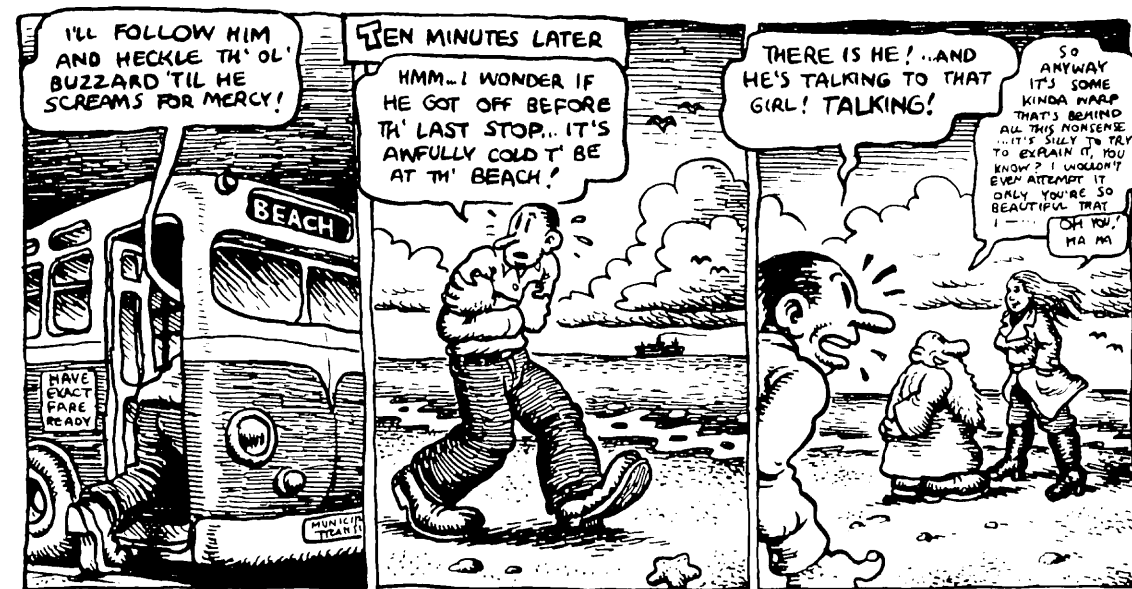
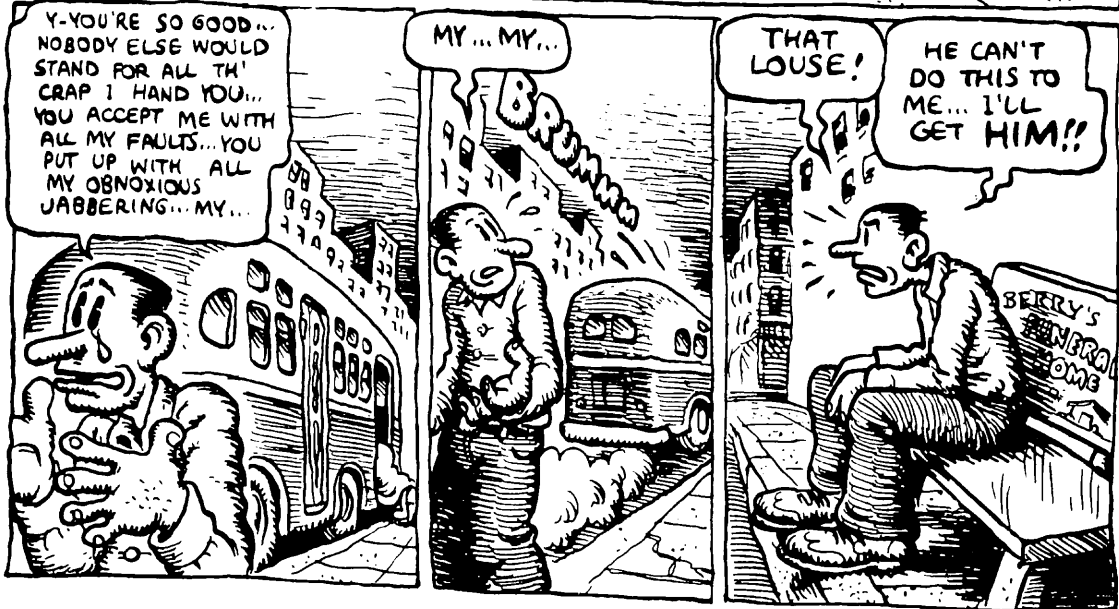
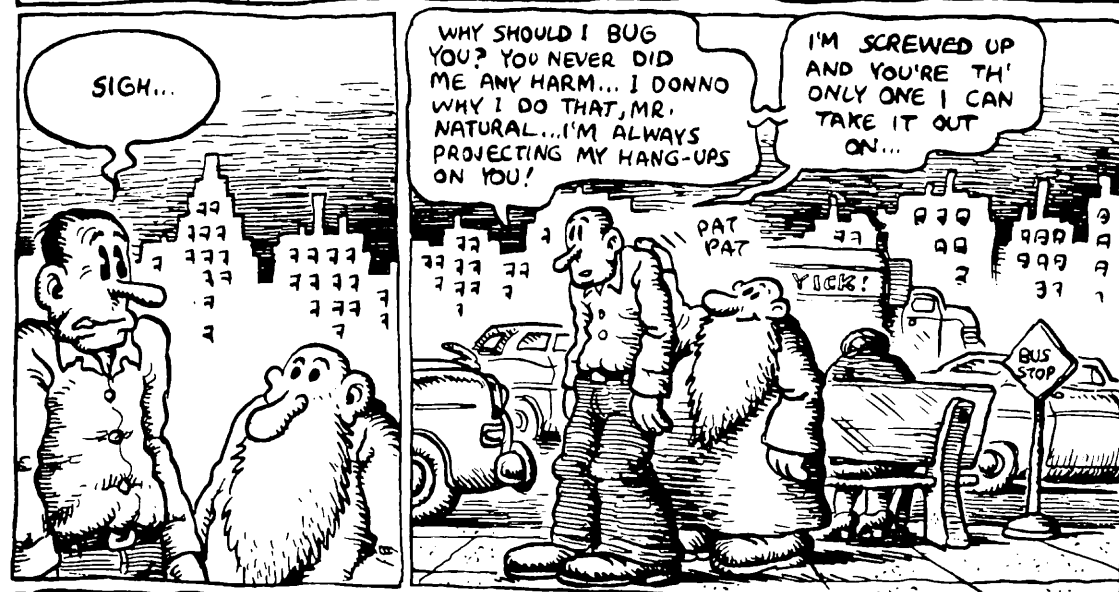
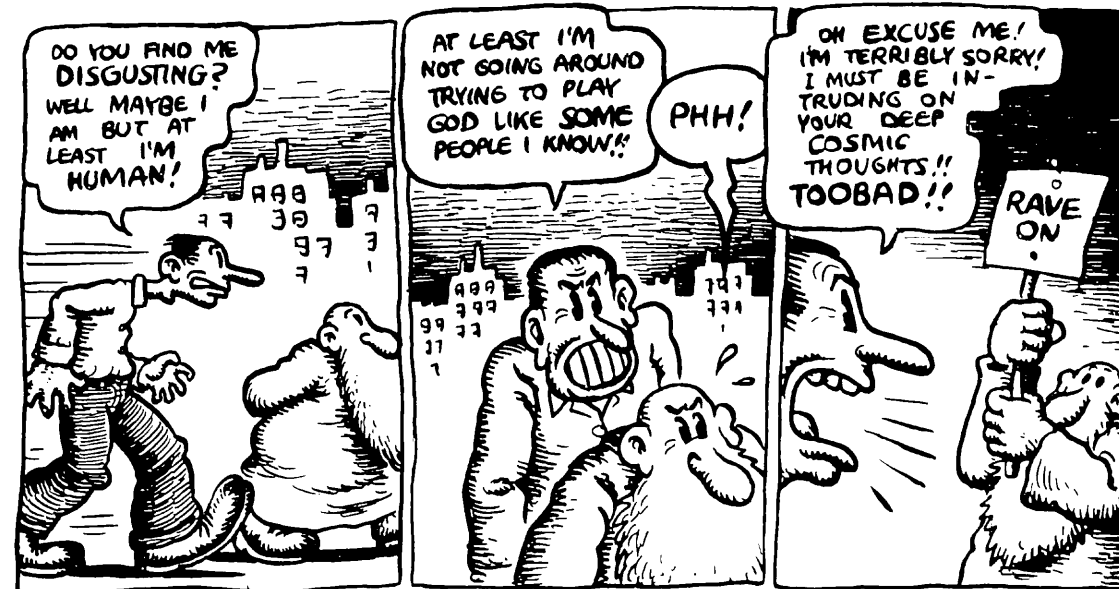


MR. NATURAL WITH A GROUP OF EARLY DISCIPLES IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 1962

Mr Natural Stops Talking

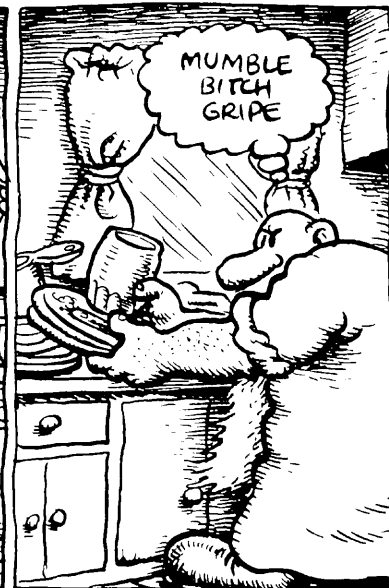
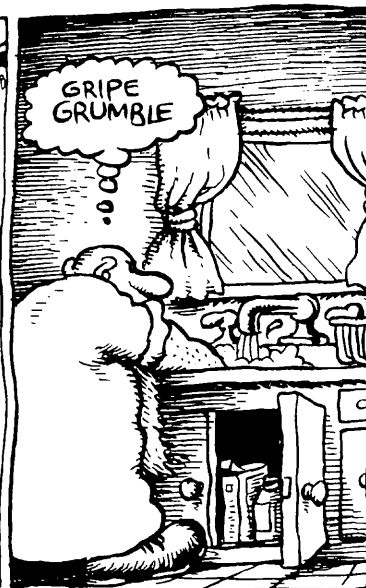
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Mr. Natural

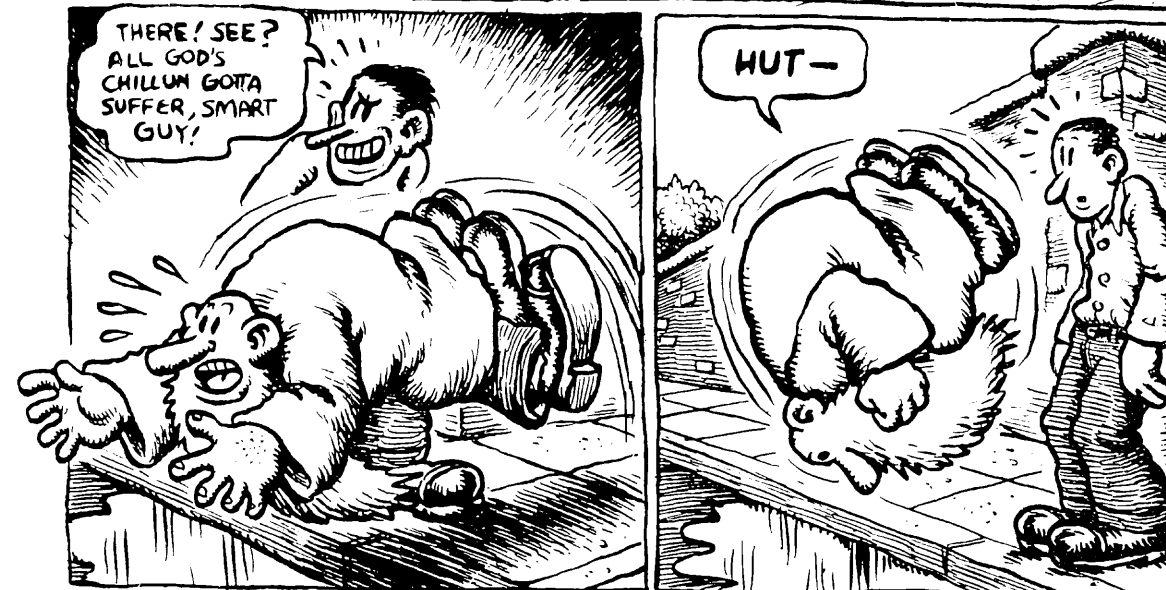
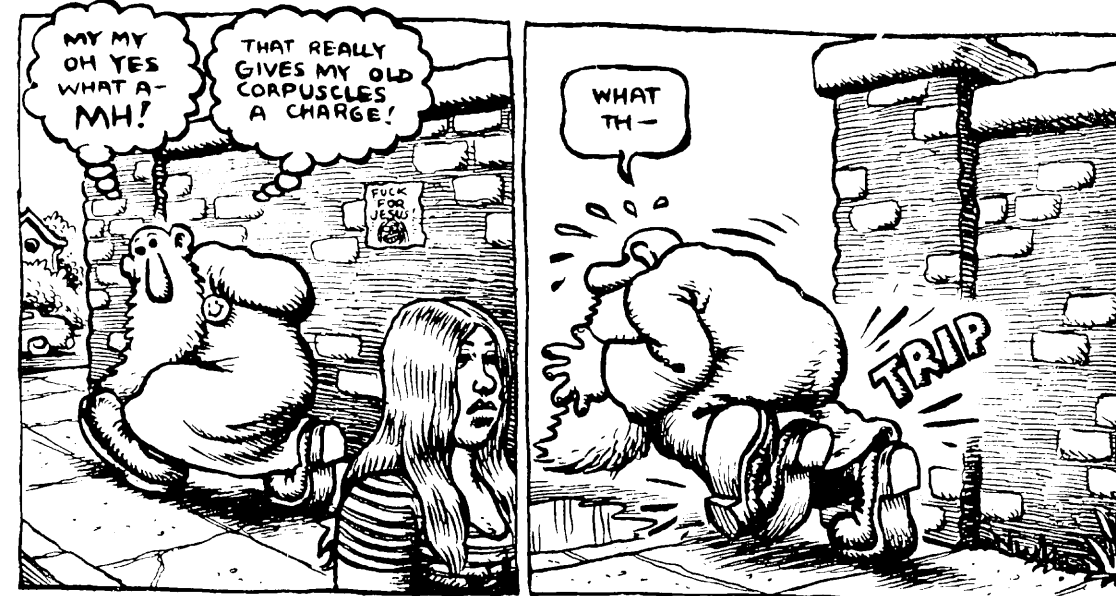
"DOES THE DISHES"



MR. NATURAL and FLAKEY FOOT in A GURL IN HOTPANTS

By R. CRUMB



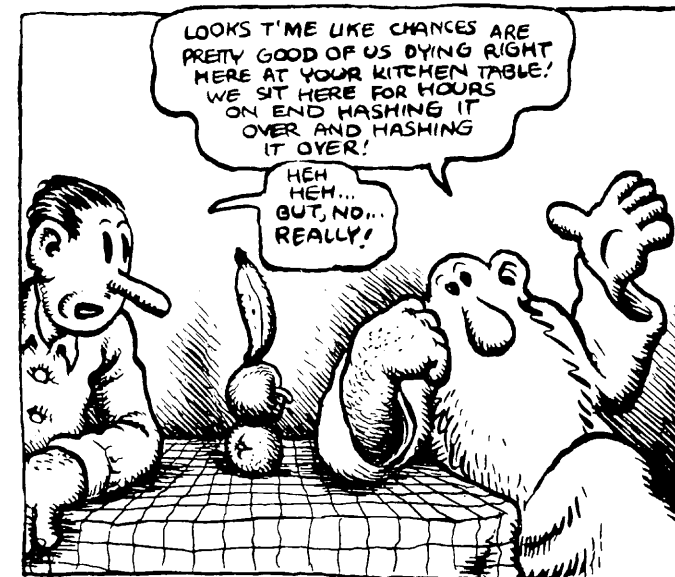
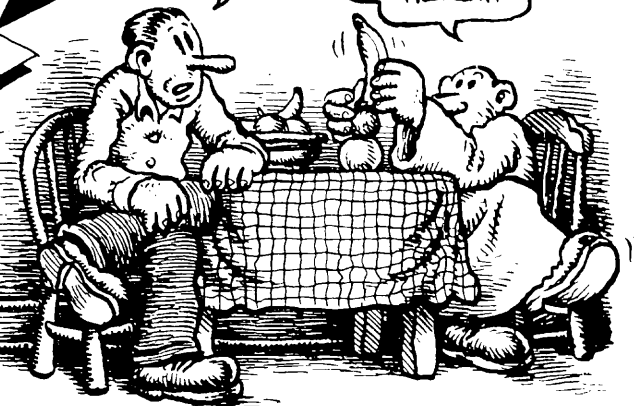


Mr. Natural and FLAKEY FOONT SITIN' AROUND THE KITCHEN TABLE

©1971 BY R. CAUME STUDIOS

MR. NATURAL,
DO YOU EVER
THINK ABOUT
DYING?

OH, I'VE
CONSIDERED
IT, BUT MY
WORK IS NOT
YET FINISHED
HERE...



LOOKS T'ME LIKE CHANCES ARE
PRETTY GOOD OF US DYING RIGHT
HERE AT YOUR KITCHEN TABLE.
WE SIT HERE FOR HOURS
ON END HASHING IT
OVER AND HASHING
IT OVER!

HEH
HEH...
BUT, NO...
REALLY!



IT'S SCAREY TO
THINK THAT SOMEDAY
I... ME... FLAKEY
FOONT... WILL BE
DEAD!! IT
TERRIFIES ME!

OH
YEAH?

ZAT
RIGHT!



I'D BE RELIEVED
IF I WERE YOU!
CHUCKLE...

THANKS!



NO BIG THING,
FOONT! DYING IS
NO BIG THING!?

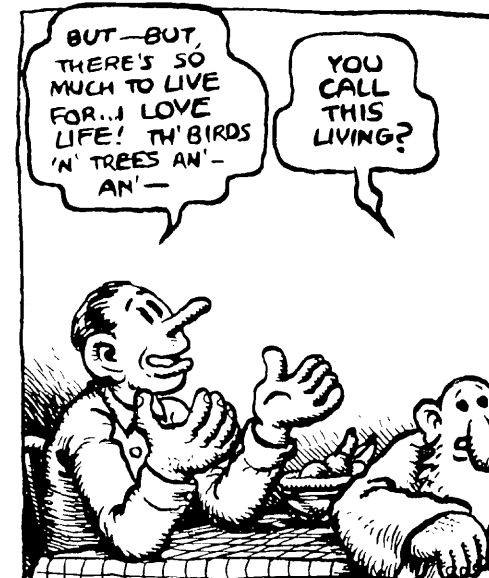


NO...

BIG...

JAB POKE
JAB

THING...



BUT—BUT
THERE'S SO
MUCH TO LIVE
FOR... I LOVE
LIFE! TH' BIRDS
'N' TREES AN'—
AN'—

YOU
CALL
THIS
LIVING?



I DON'T WANT TO
DIE! I DON'T!
I DON'T!
SOB SOB
SOB...

FA' CHRISAKE
FOONT, GROW
UP! RISE ABOVE
YOUR OWN PRECIOUS
CARCASS JUST
LONG ENOUGH
TO— AHM,
WHAT'S THE USE!



GODDAMN MORON DOESN'T
KNOW 'IS ASS PROM 'IS ELBOW!
I'M CASTING MY PEARLS BEFORE
SWINE! THICKSKULLED
BASTARD! MIGHT'S WELL BE
TAKEN 'TO TH' WALL...
MUMBLE
GRUNBLE
MUTTER...

SHIFF...
HUH?



I GOTTA QUIT WASTING
MY BREATH 'N' JUST KEEP
THE PEGGANTS AT ARM'S
LENGTH AN' STAY HOME
AN' PLAY MY SAXOPHONE
AN' MEDITATE... IT'S TH'
ONLY THING
TO DO...

WHAT?!



ARE YOU SO
COLD THAT YOU
CAN'T STAND THE
SIGHT OF NORMAL
HUMAN FEELINGS?
CAN'T YOU FEEL?
CAN'T YOU—

STOP!
STOP!
YOU'RE
BREAKING
MY
HEART!



LISTEN, SONNY, IF
YOU CAN'T HANDLE
IT ON MY LEVEL,
THEN, WELL,
UH...

WELL
WHAT?
YOU'LL TAKE
YOUR DOLLY
AND DISHES
AN' GO HOME,
RIGHT?

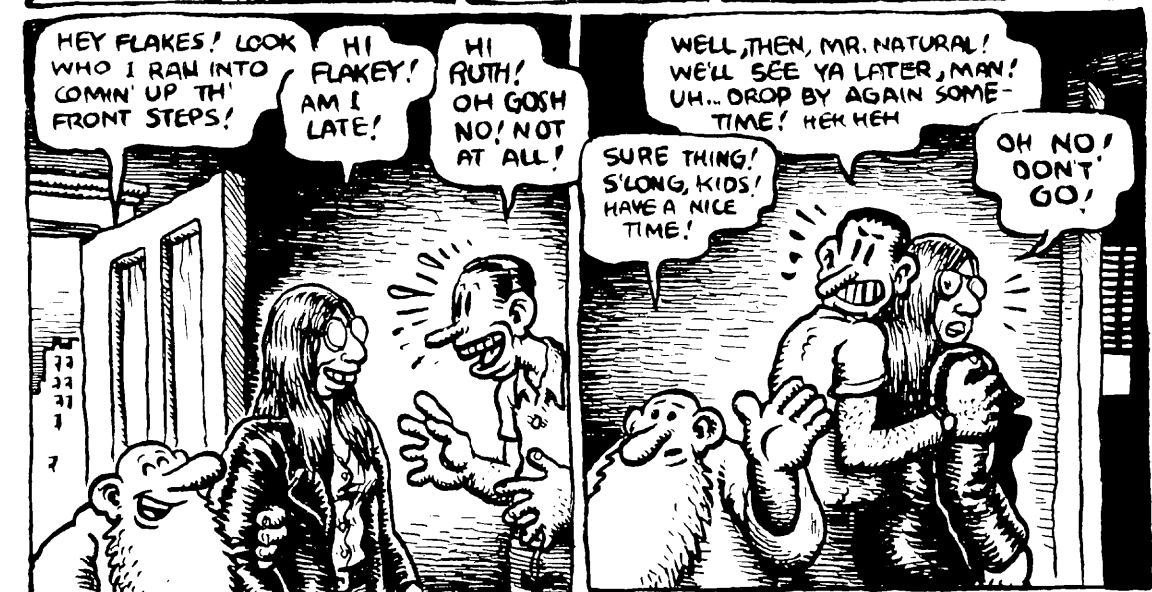
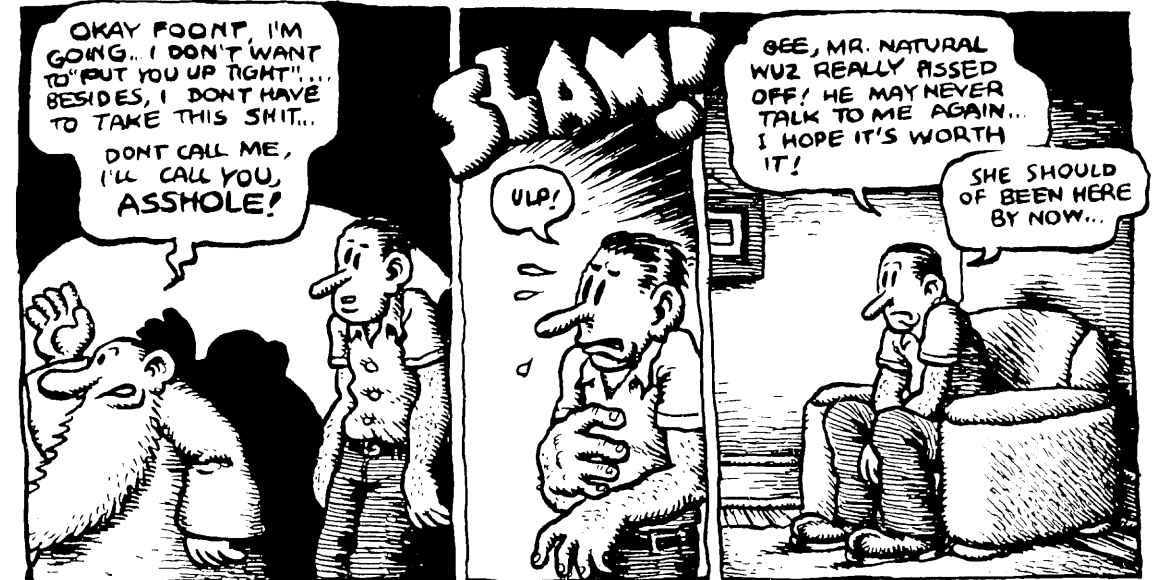
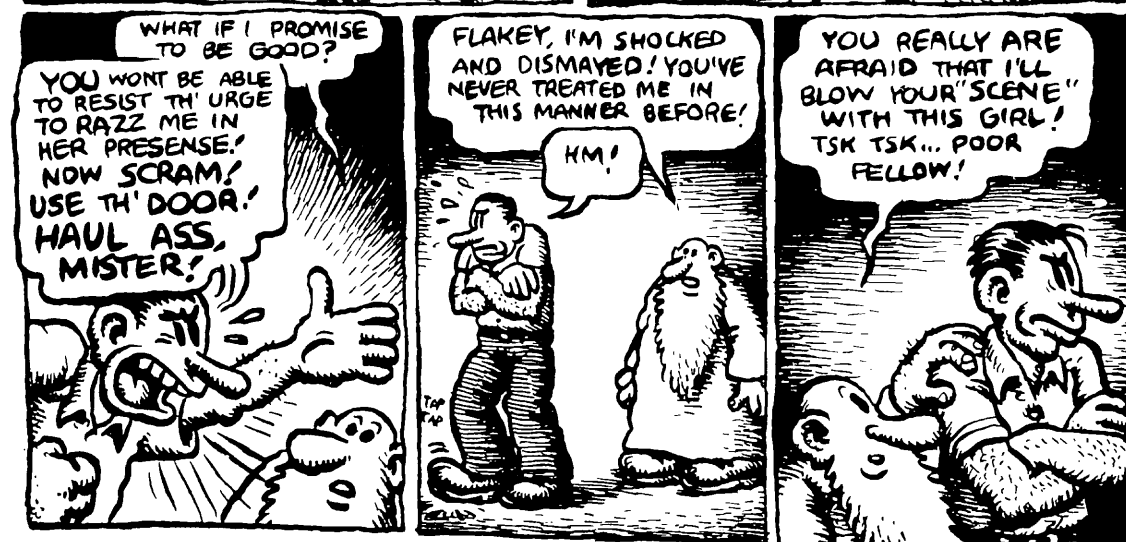
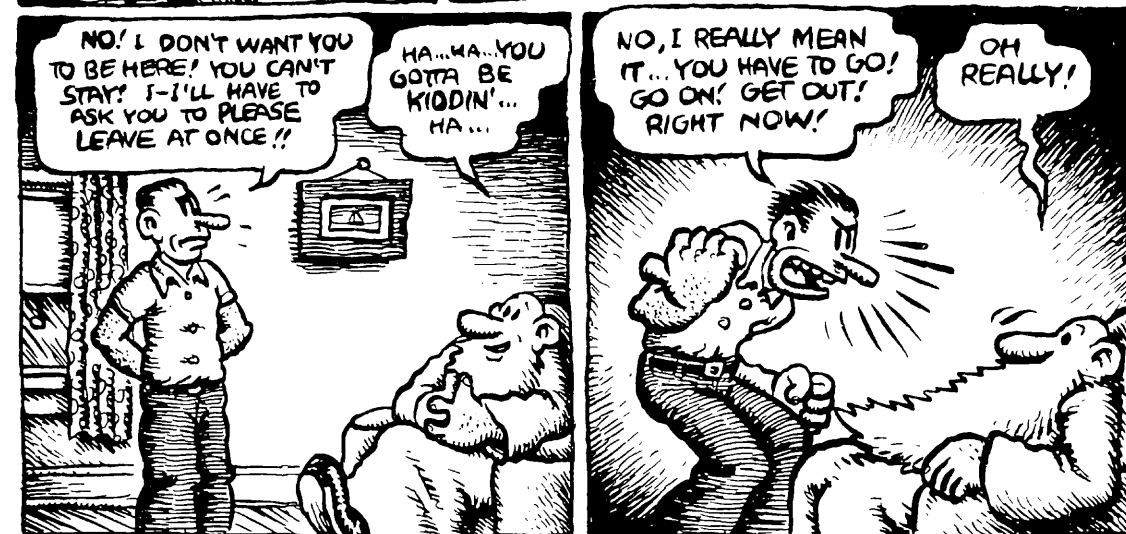
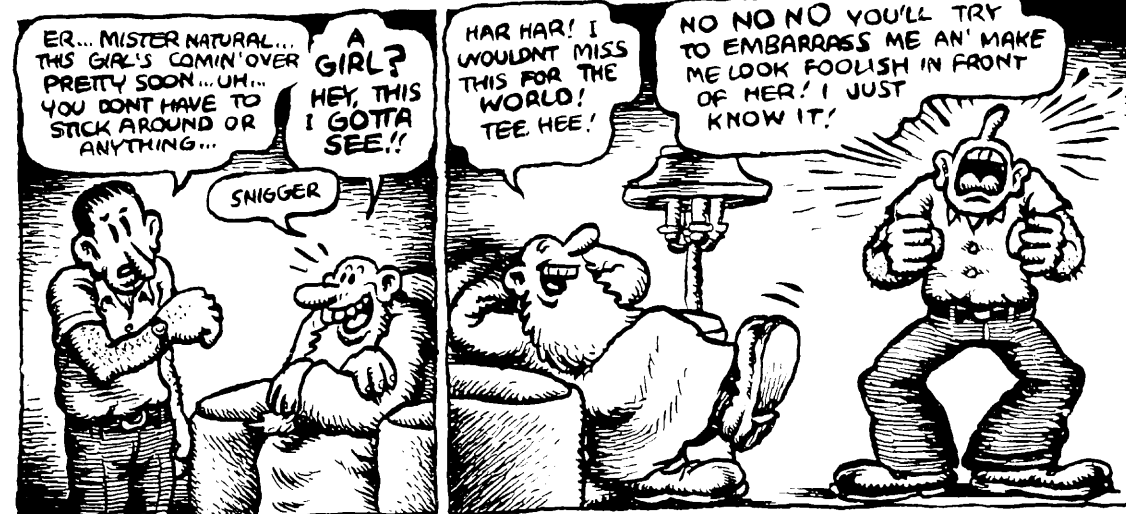


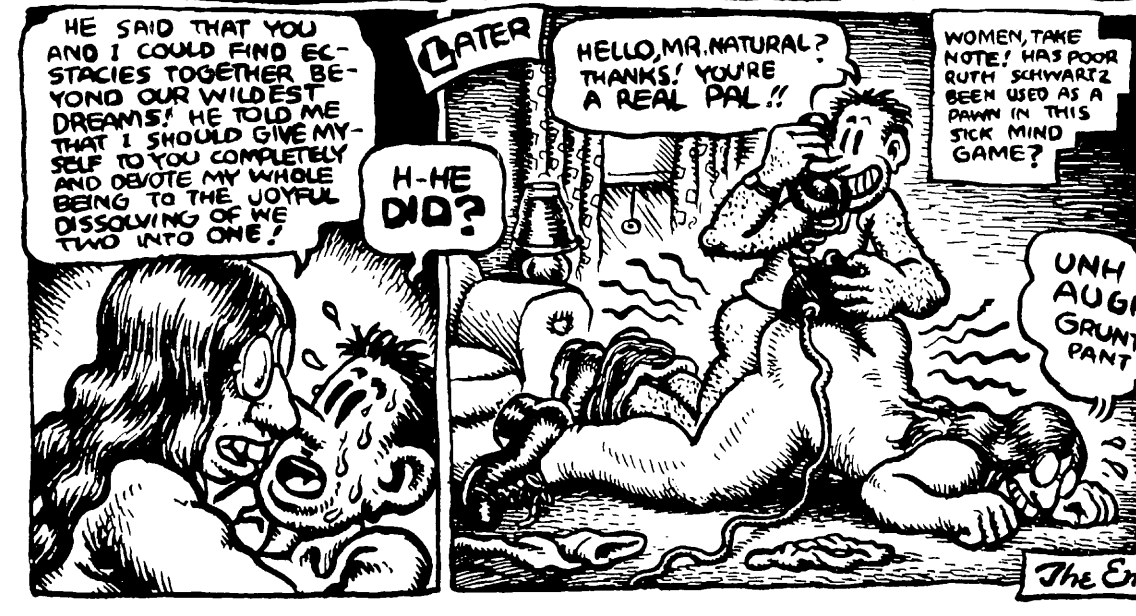
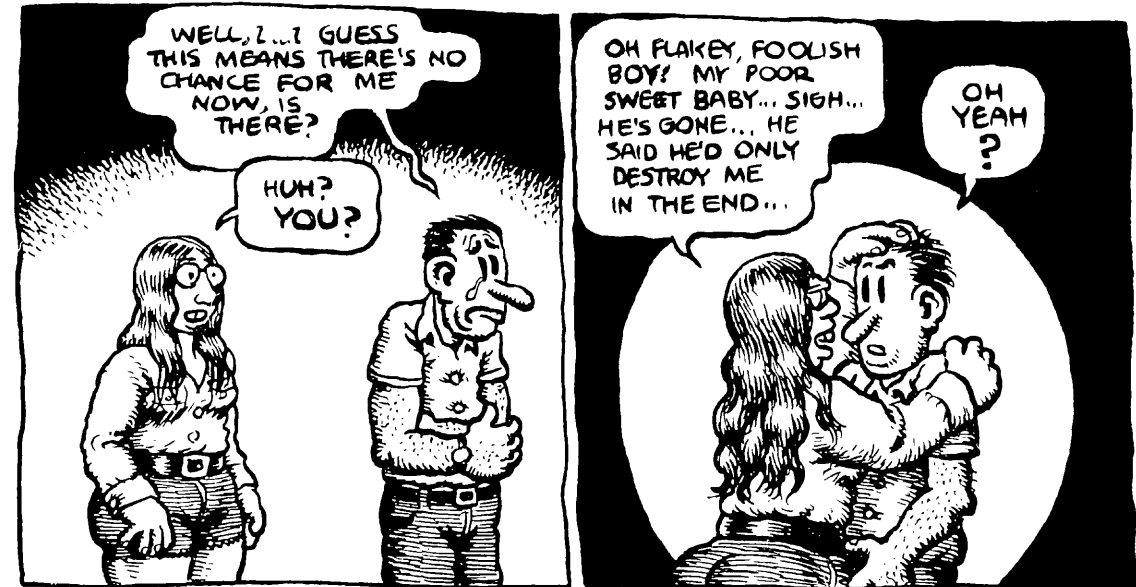
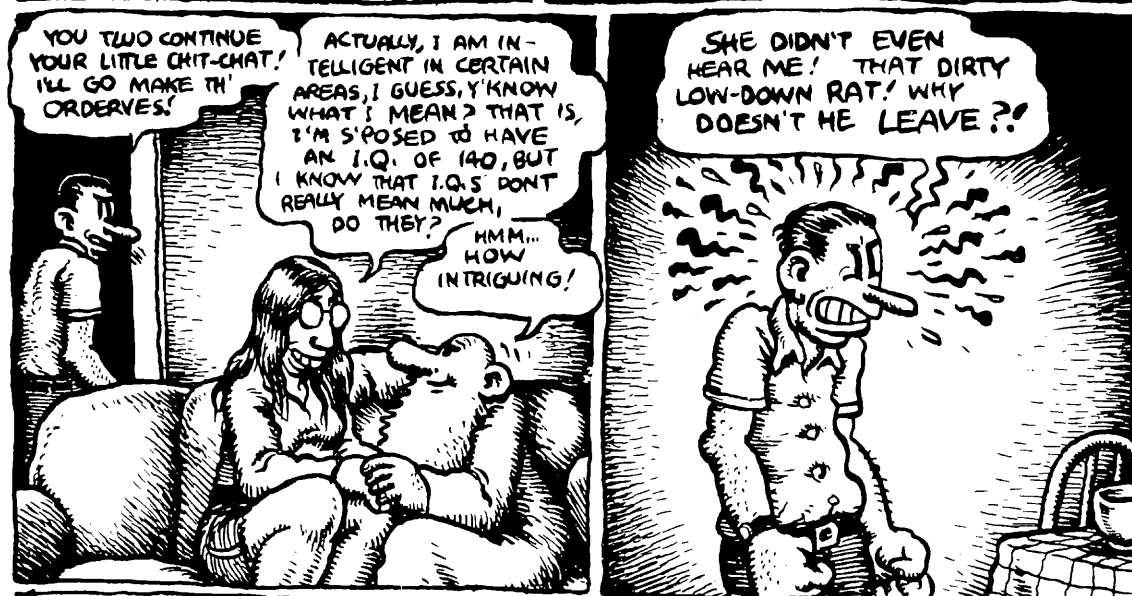
WHATEVER
YOU SAY,
GUMMO!

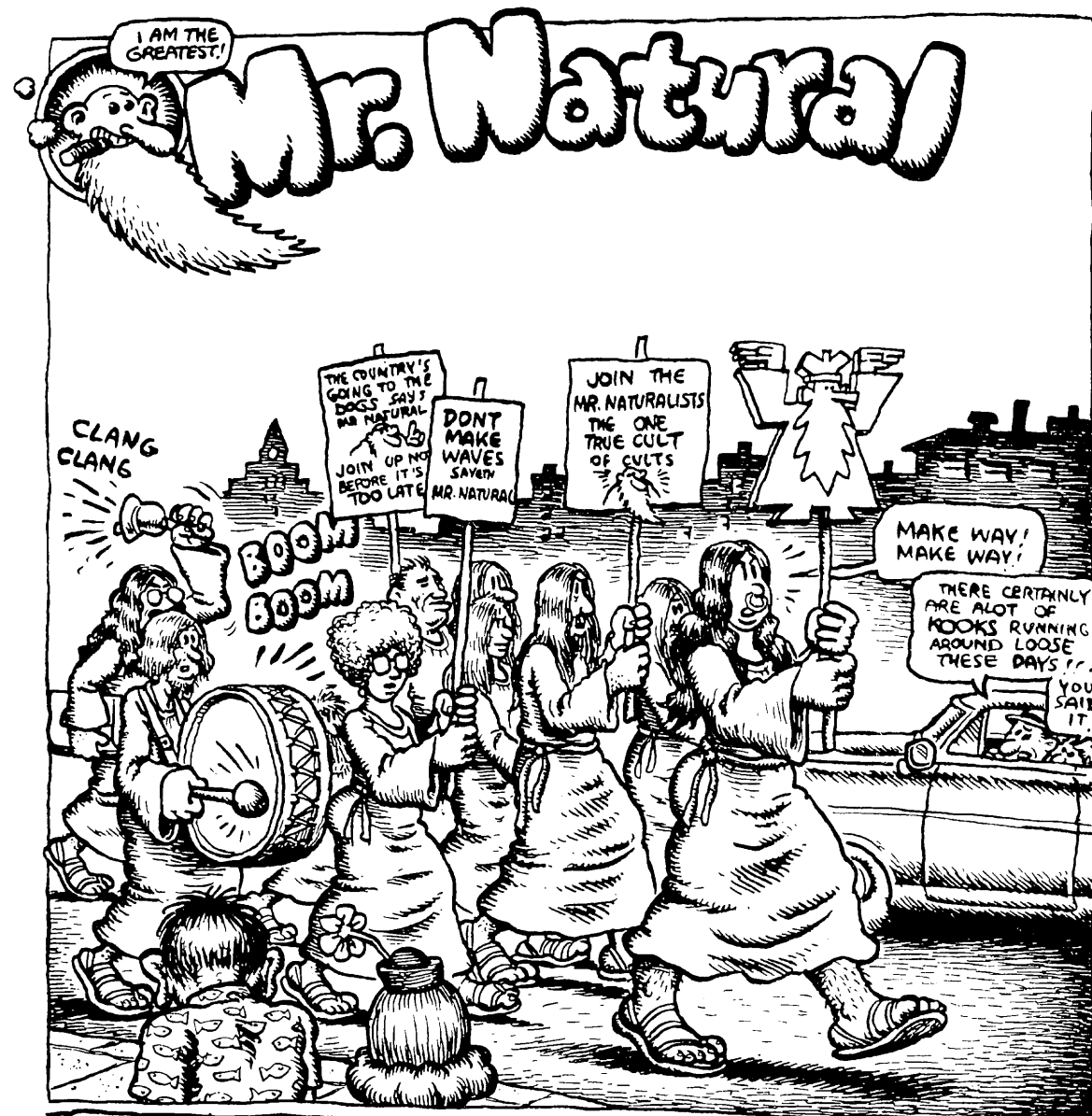
OH GHOD,
YOU VEX
ME!

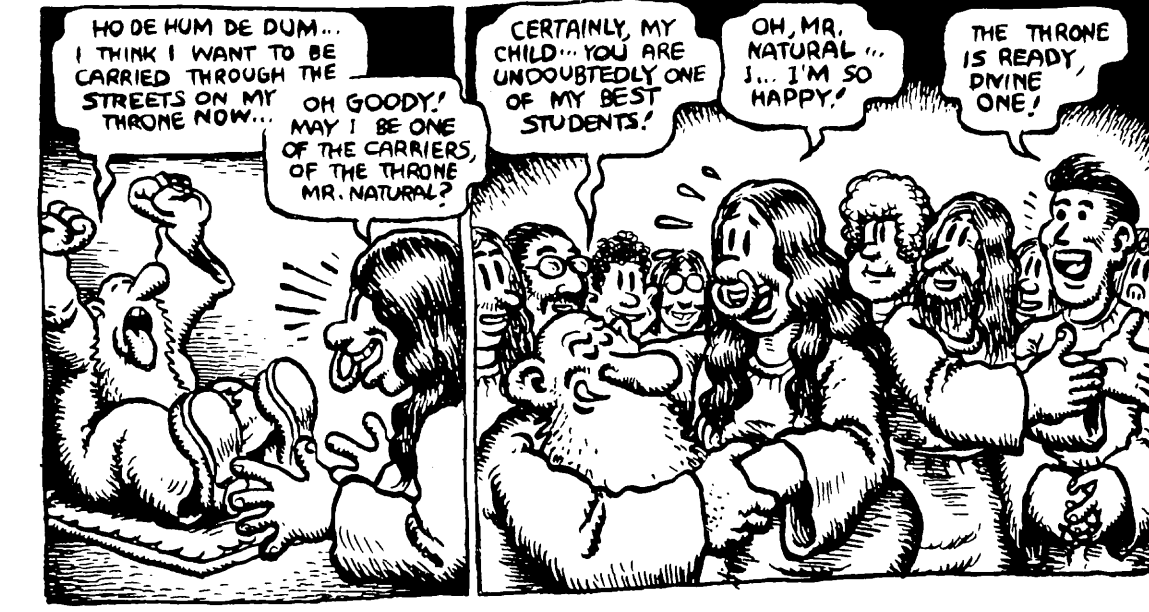
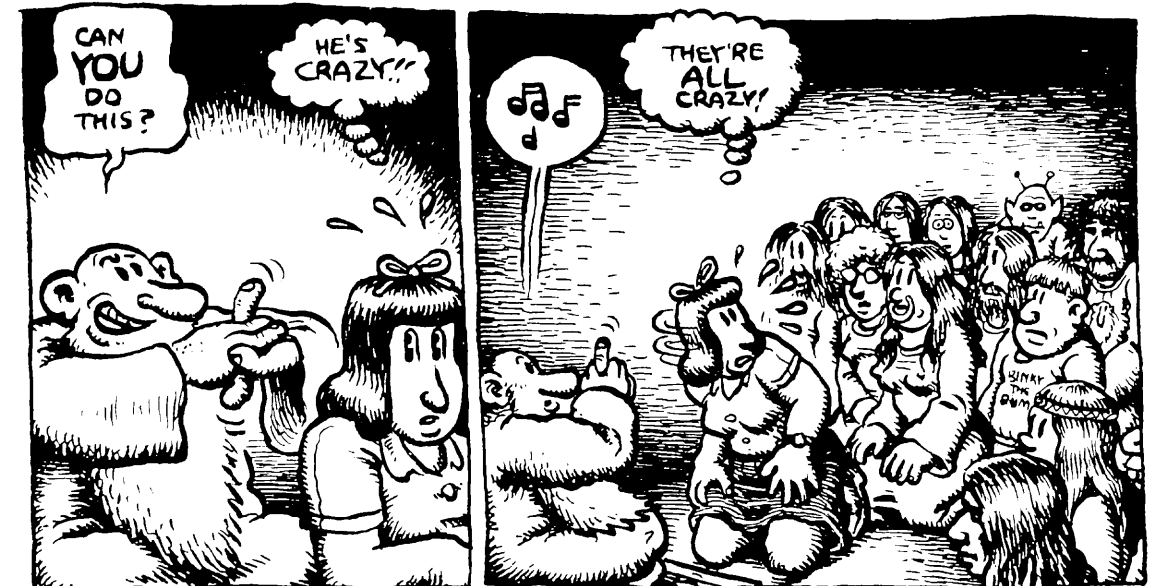
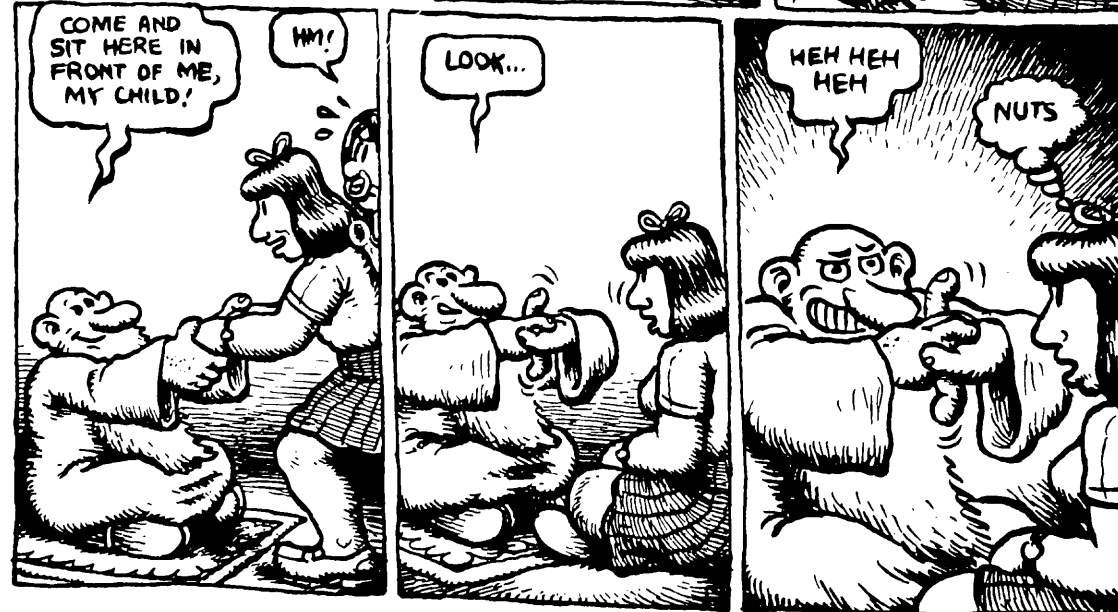
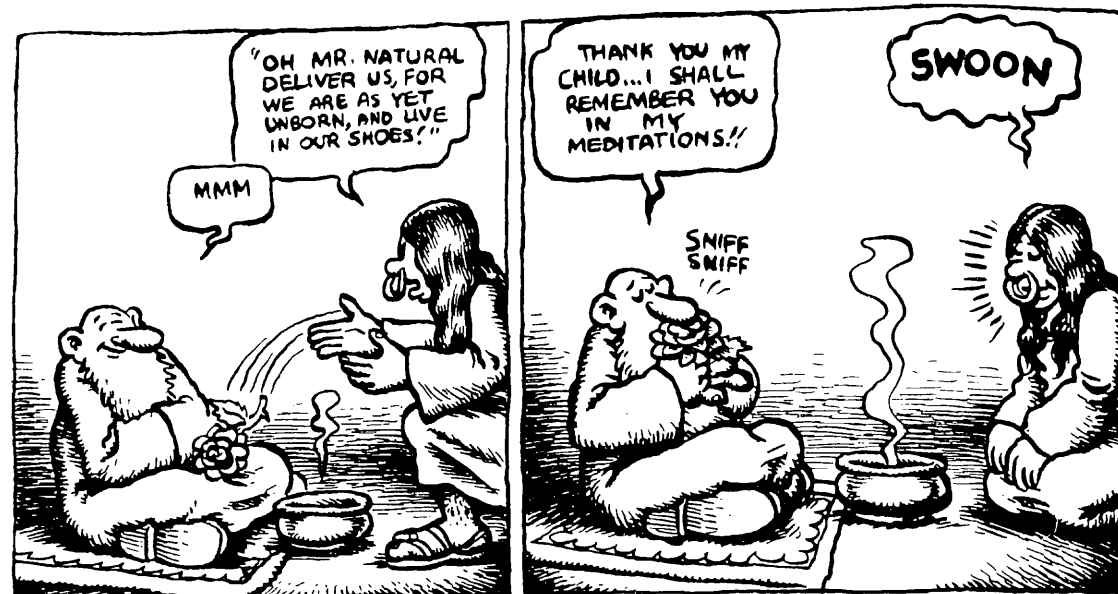
Mr. Natural

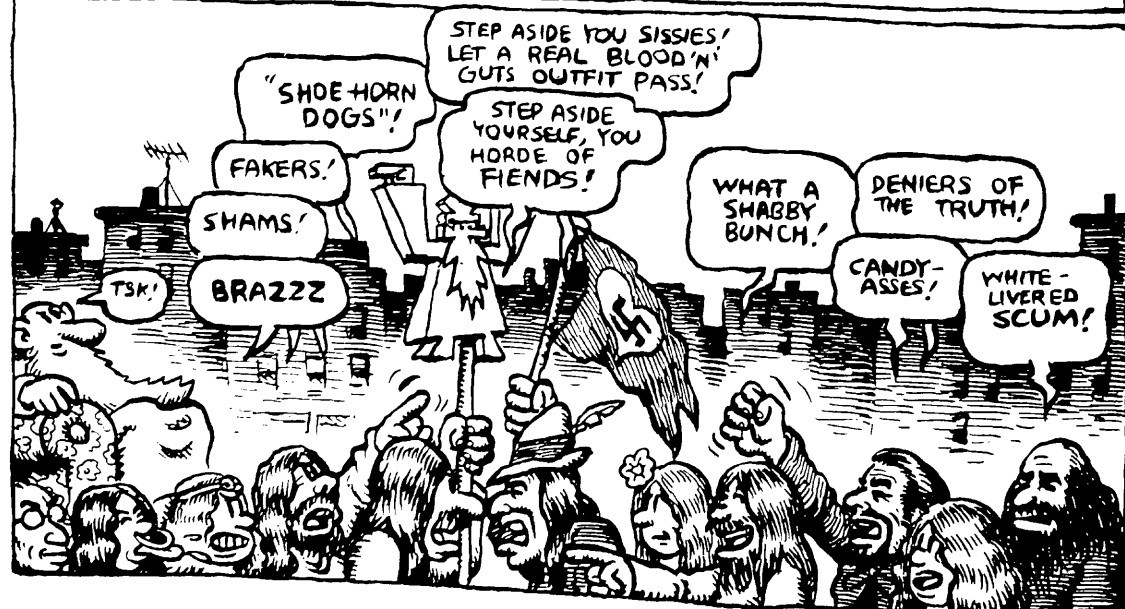
in "THE GIRLFRIEND"

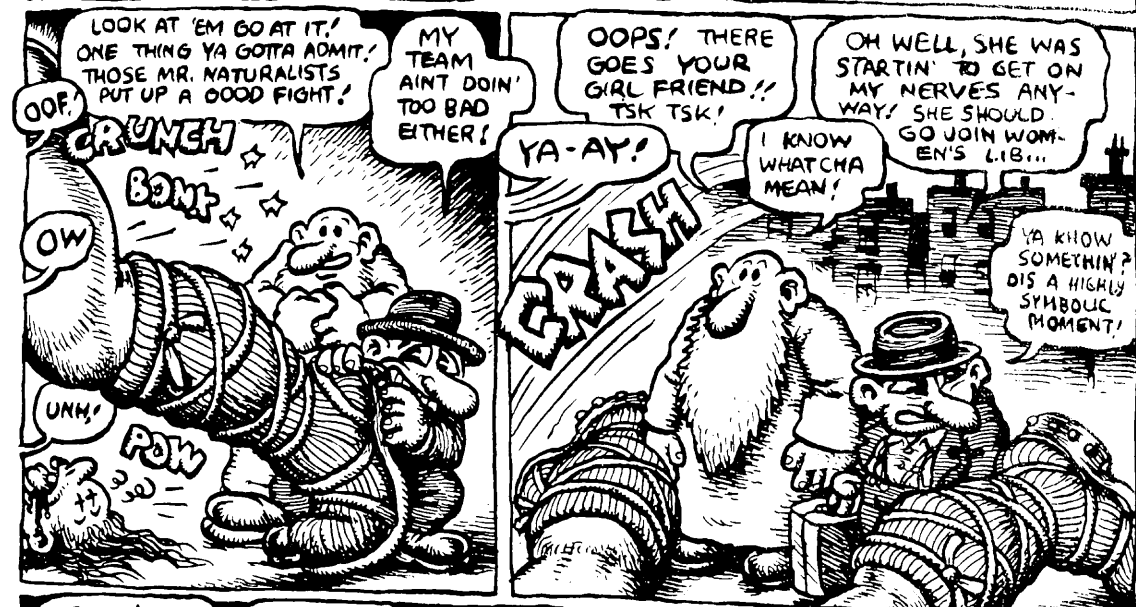








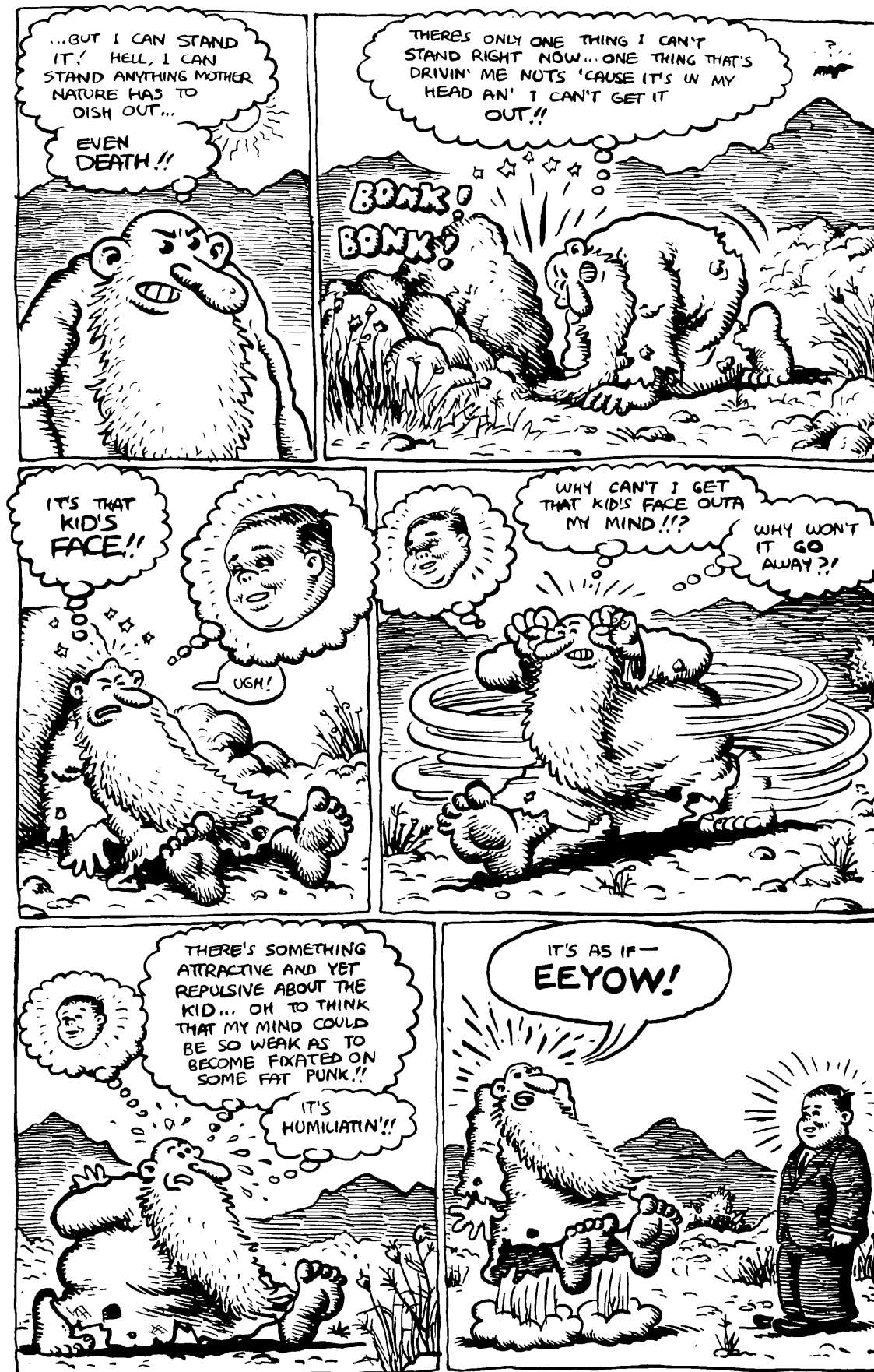


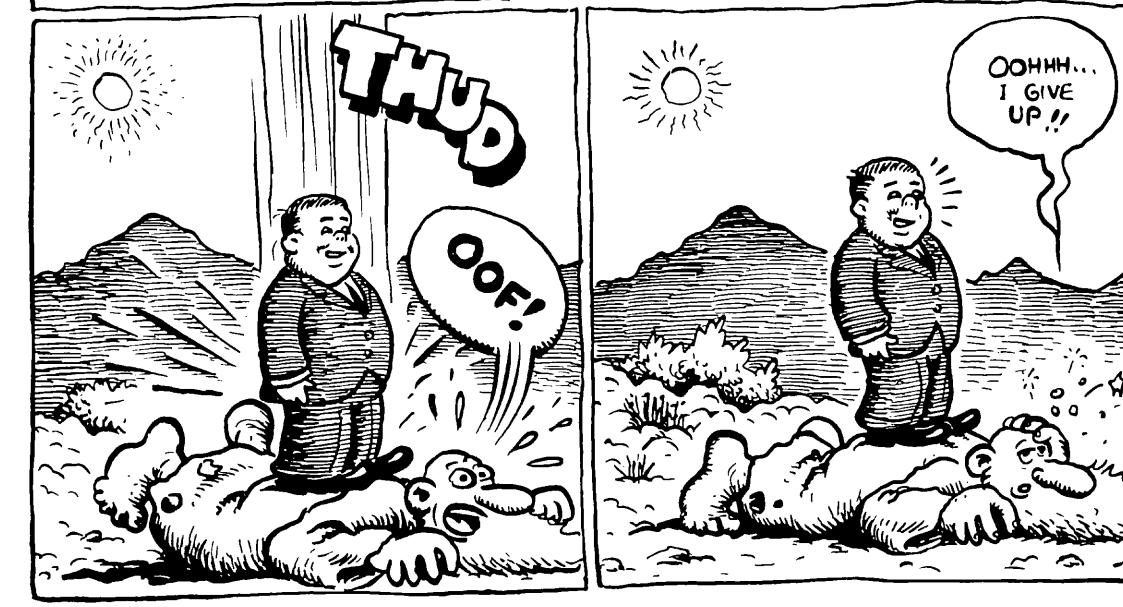
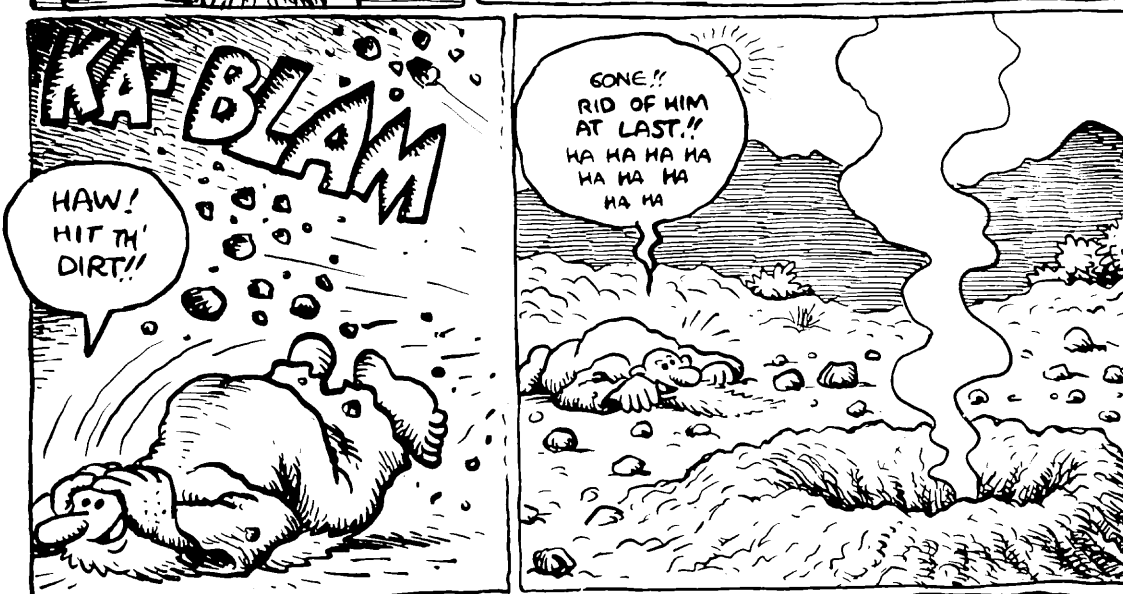
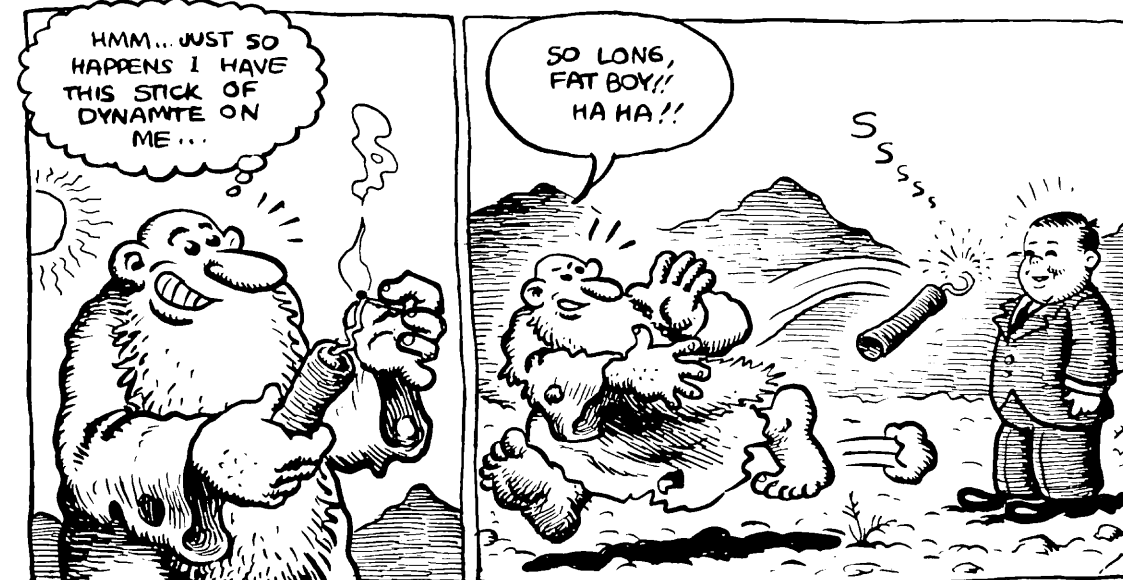
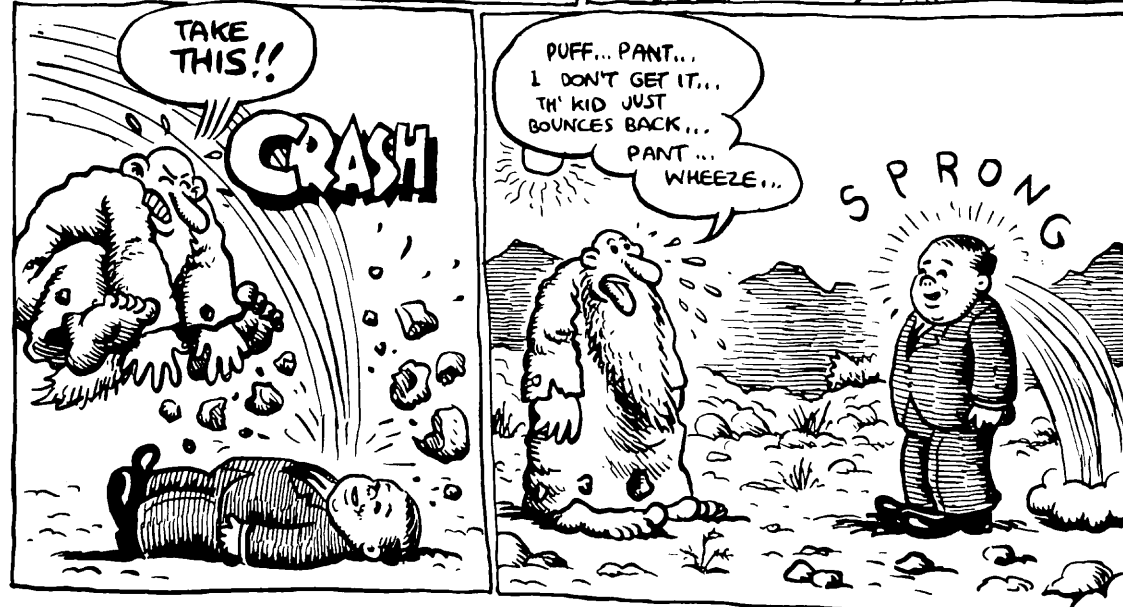
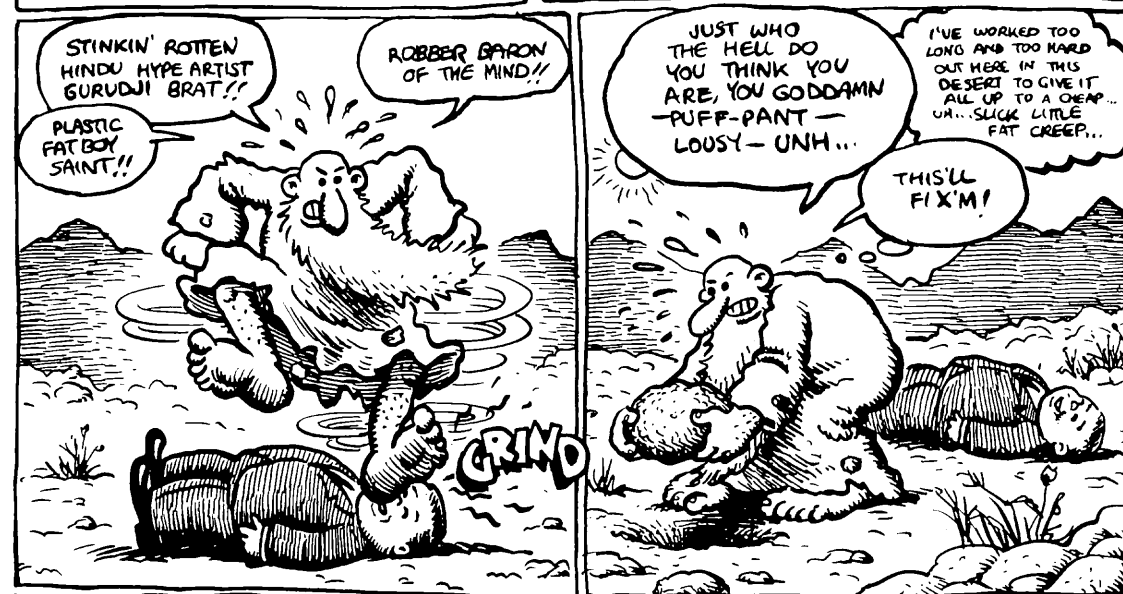
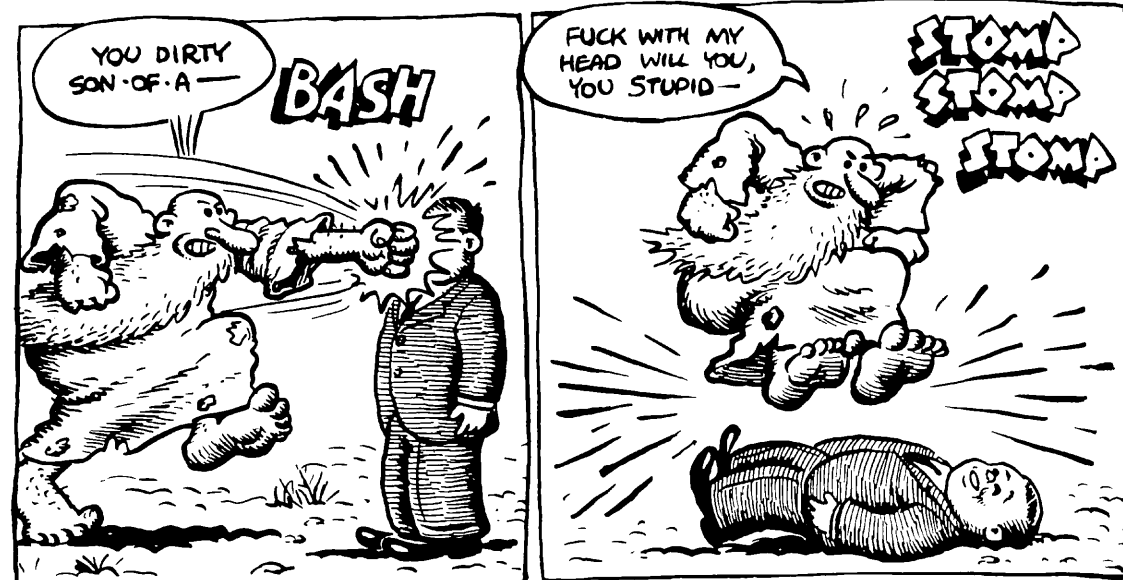


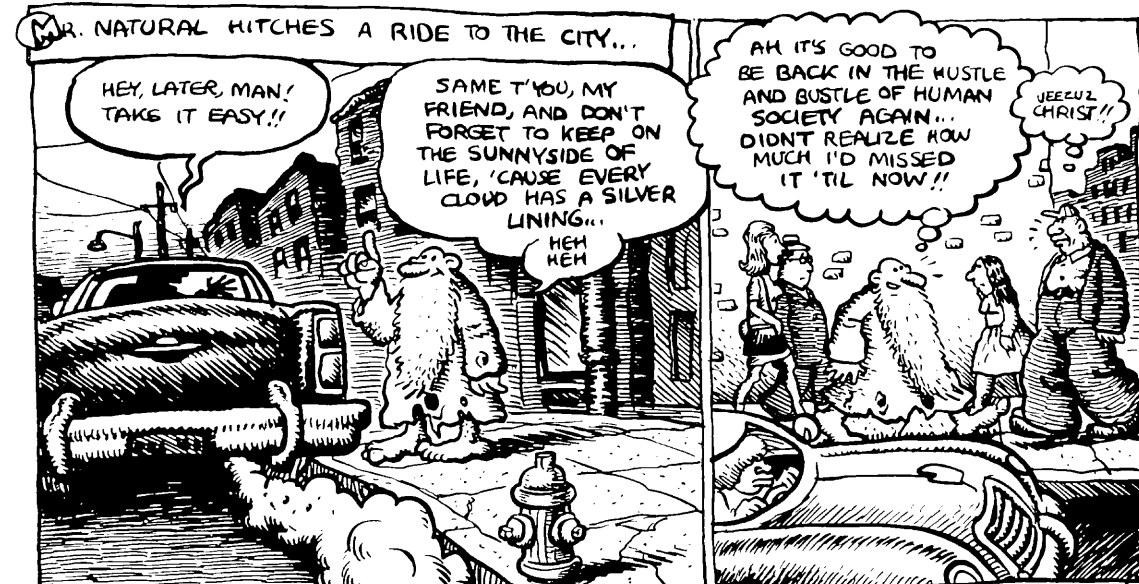
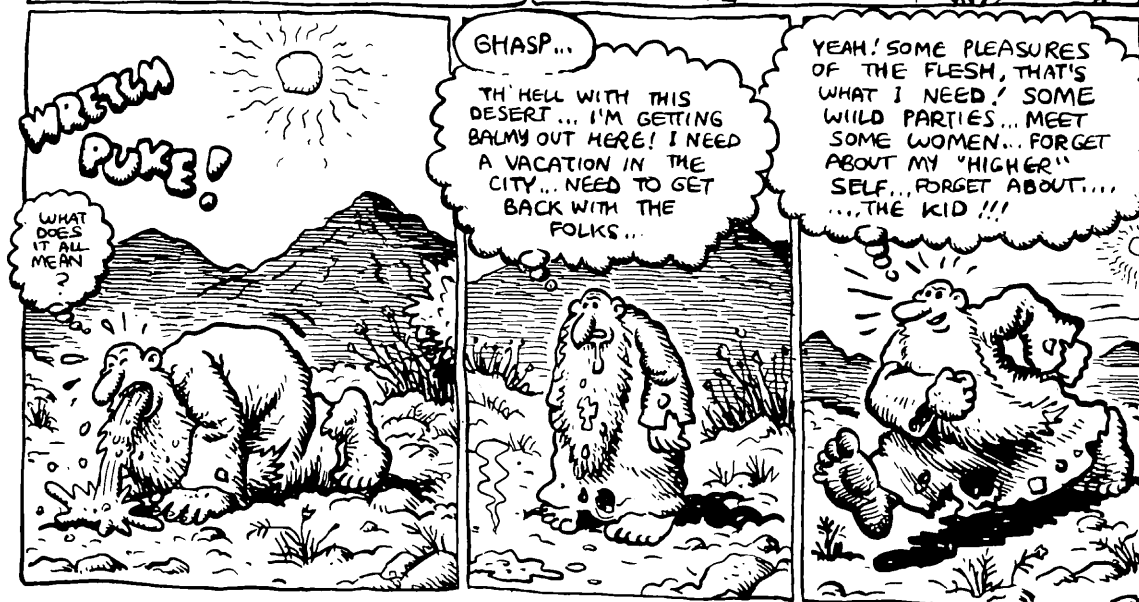
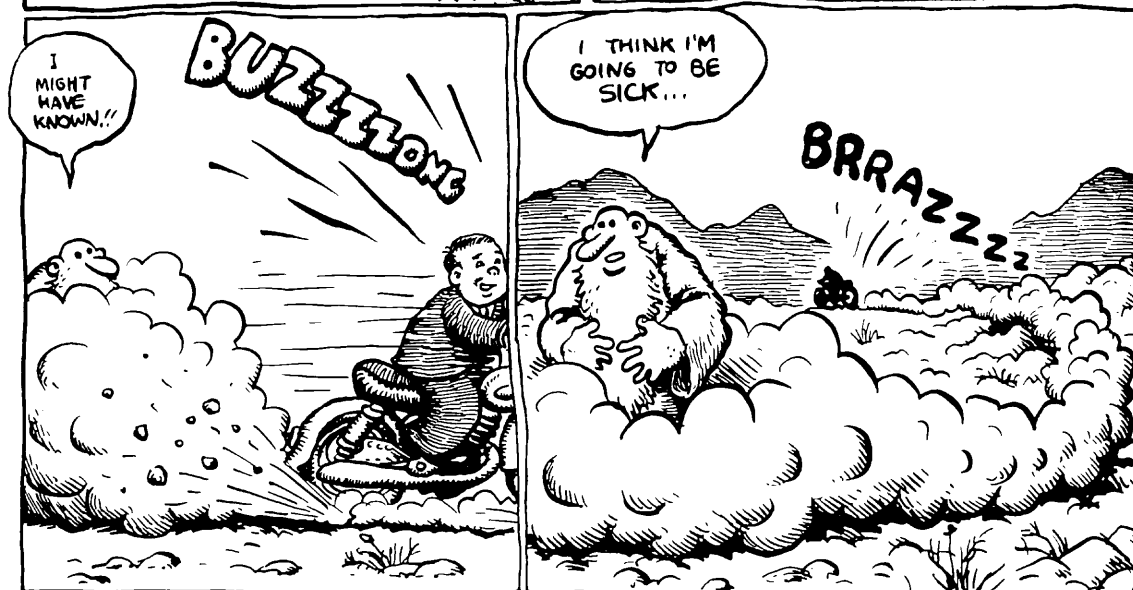
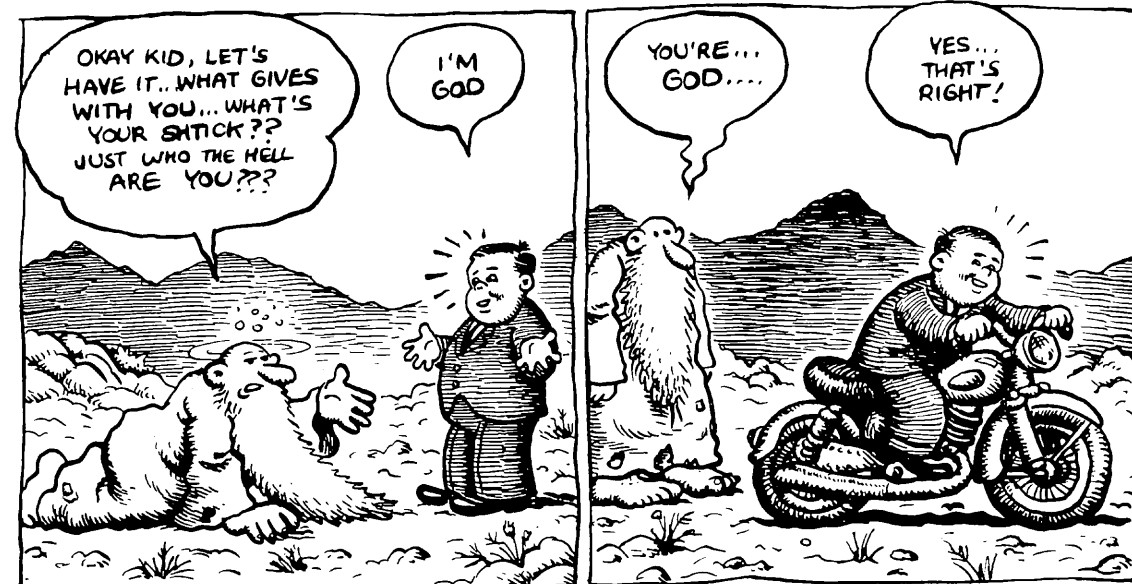


Mr. Natural meets "The Kid"

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**UH OH!
HE'S
BACK!
WHO'S BACK?
YOU'LL FIND OUT!**

R. CRUMB
© 1986

THOSE DIRTY
@*!!! TRYIN'A
BEAT ME OUTA MY
FAIR SHARE OF THE
GOOD
LIFE!

OH FO-O-ONT
OH FLAKEY FO-O-ONT
YOOO HO-O-O

HUH? WHAT??
SOMEBODY
CALLING MY
NAME...WHA-
WHAT'S
THAT??

FLA-
LAKEY
FAH-
FOO-ONT

IT'S COMING
CLOSER!! MY
GOD, IT'S A
UFO! CALL-
ING MY
NAME!!

OH GOD
I ALWAYS
KNEW
THIS DAY
WOULD
COME!

FOONT
FOONT
FLAKEY
FOONT

THEY'VE
COME TO
TAKE ME
AWAY!!

I'M PARALYZED!
I CAN'T MOVE-
I-NO WAIT...
IT CAN'T BE-
IT'S-IT'S-

FLA-LA-
LA-LAKEY
FAH-FAH-FAH-
FOO-OONT

...THAT IS, I THINK
IT IS...

BOOP
BOOP
BOOPLE
BOOP-OOOP!

DING
DING

BZZZZT!

WHIRRR

FOONT-
OROONI...
FLAKEY
O'FOONT
MEVOUT-
EE!!!

OH DEAR JESUS...
IT IS HIM... OH
LORD... NOW I'M
IN FOR IT... OH CHRIST,
I'VE HAD NIGHT-
MARES ABOUT
THIS MOMENT!

YEAH, IT'S
ME, FOONT...

I DIDN'T
KNOW YOU
SMOKED...

PUFF
PUFF

I
DON'T!

EEK!

HOW'D YA
LIKE THAT HIGH-
TECH ENTRANCE...
KINDA BITCHIN', HUH?
I LIKE T'MAKE A
BIG SCENE ONCE
IN A WHILE, Y'KNOW.
I'M ENTITLED,
DON'T YOU
THINK??

WELL,
YES...
I SPOSE
SO...HEH
HEH...AFTER
ALL, YOU-

I OUGHTA
KICK YOUR
ASS,
FOONT!!

OH NO!!
LISTEN,
I-I-

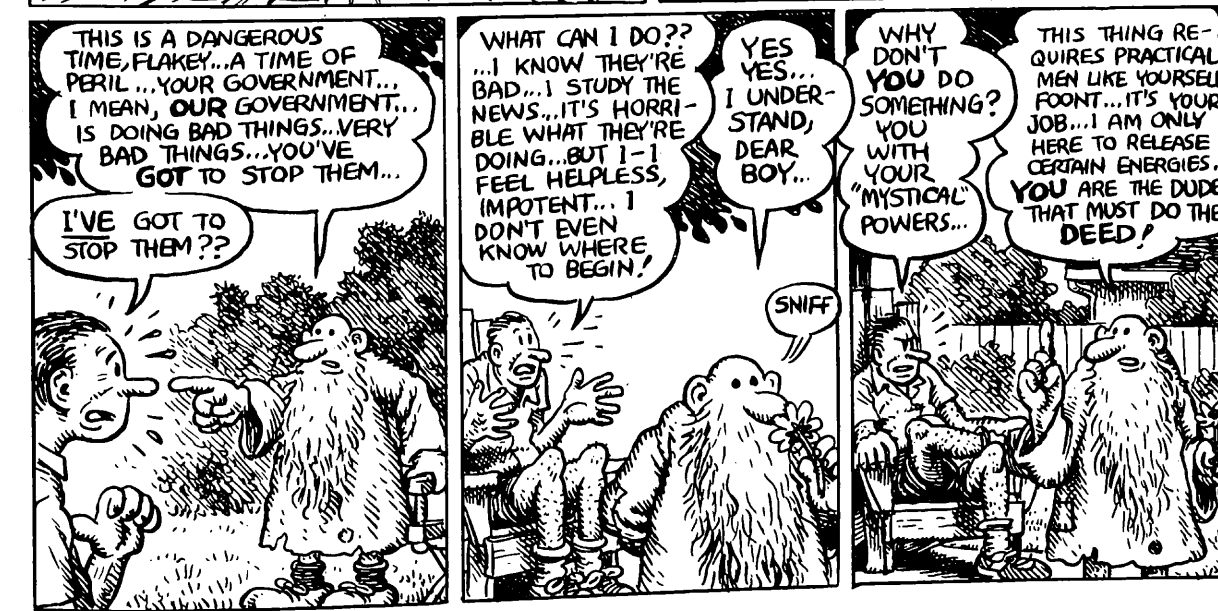
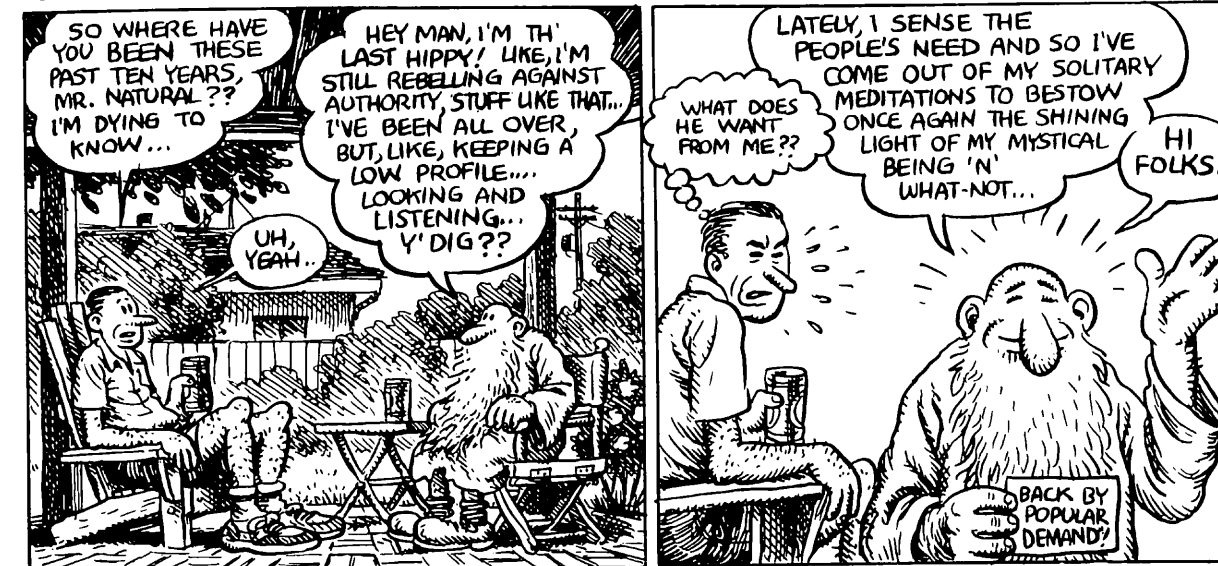
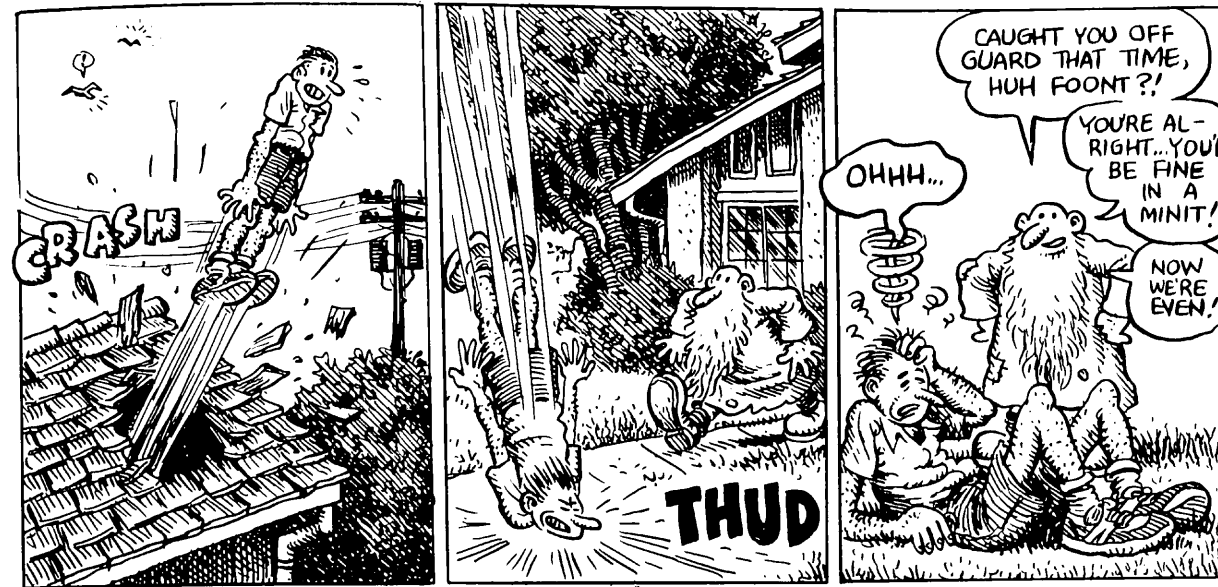
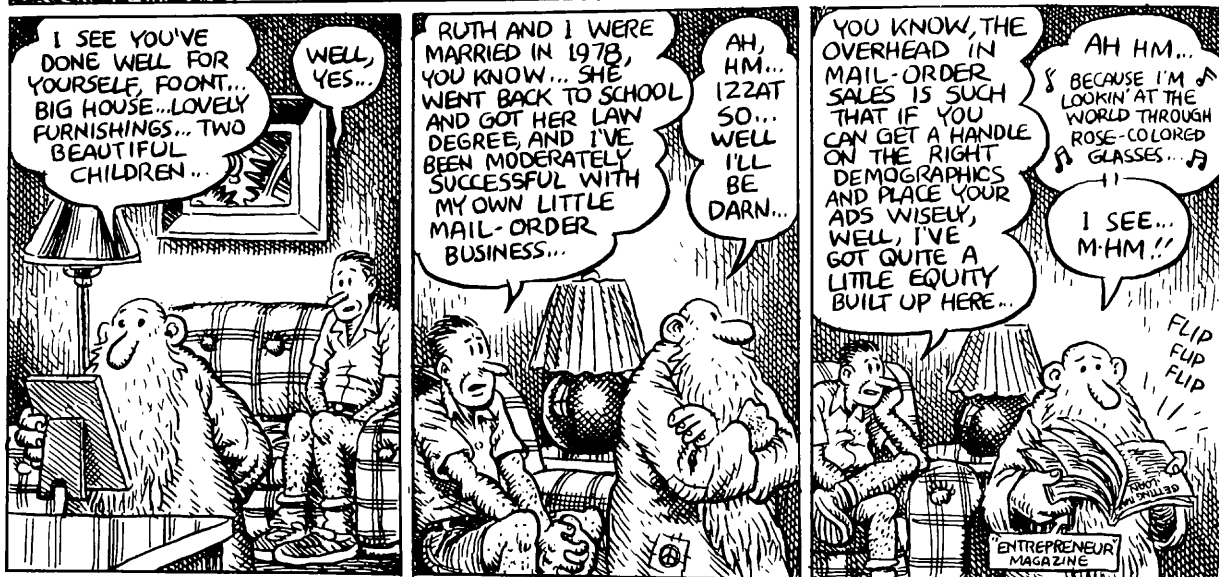
THERE'S NO EXCUSE
FOR WHAT YOU DID
TO ME, FOONT... NO
EXCUSE... I DON'T
EVEN WANT
TO HEAR
IT!!

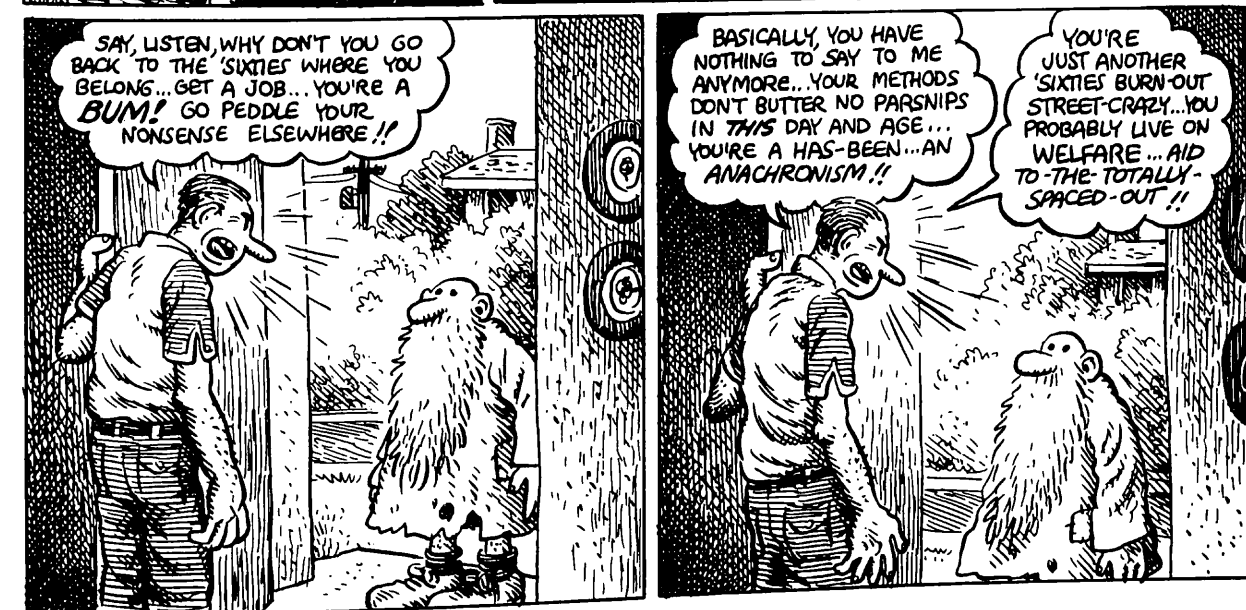
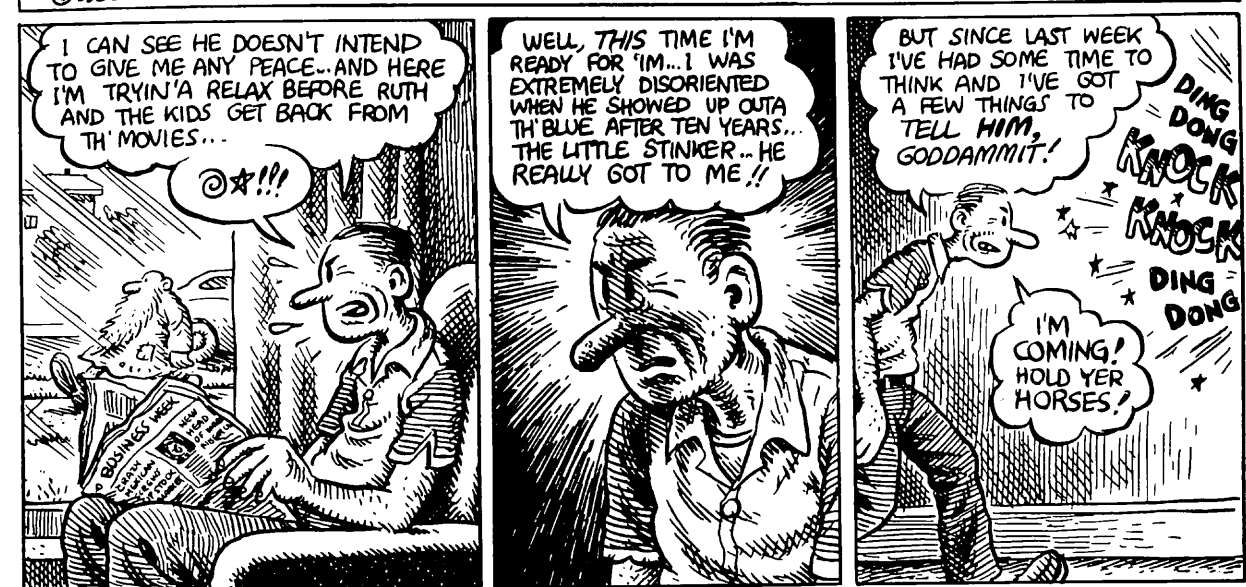
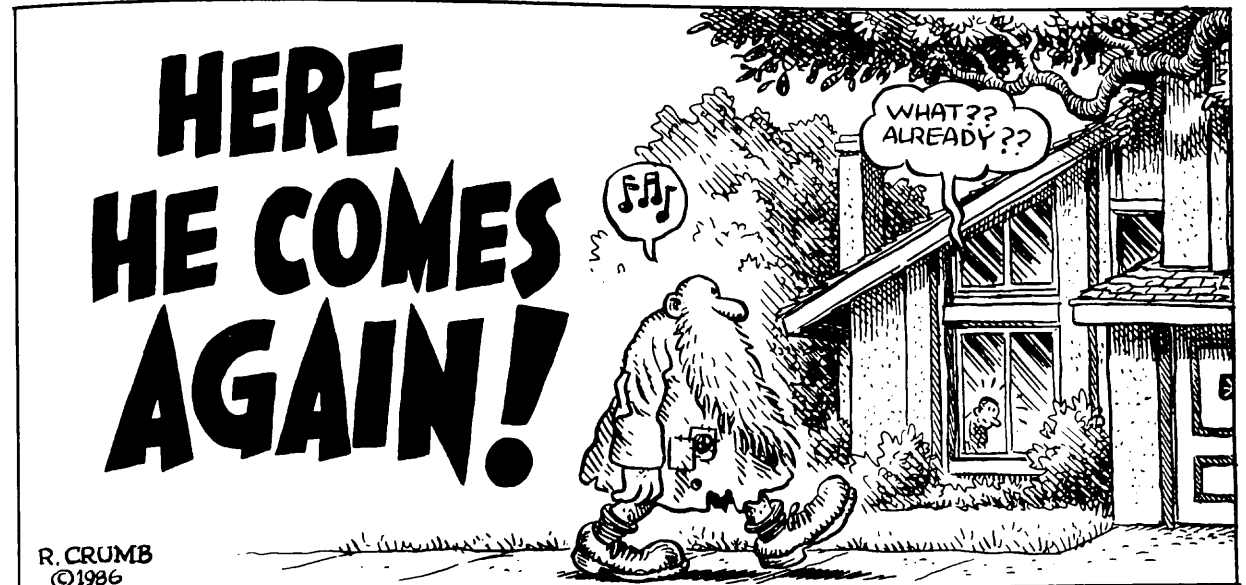
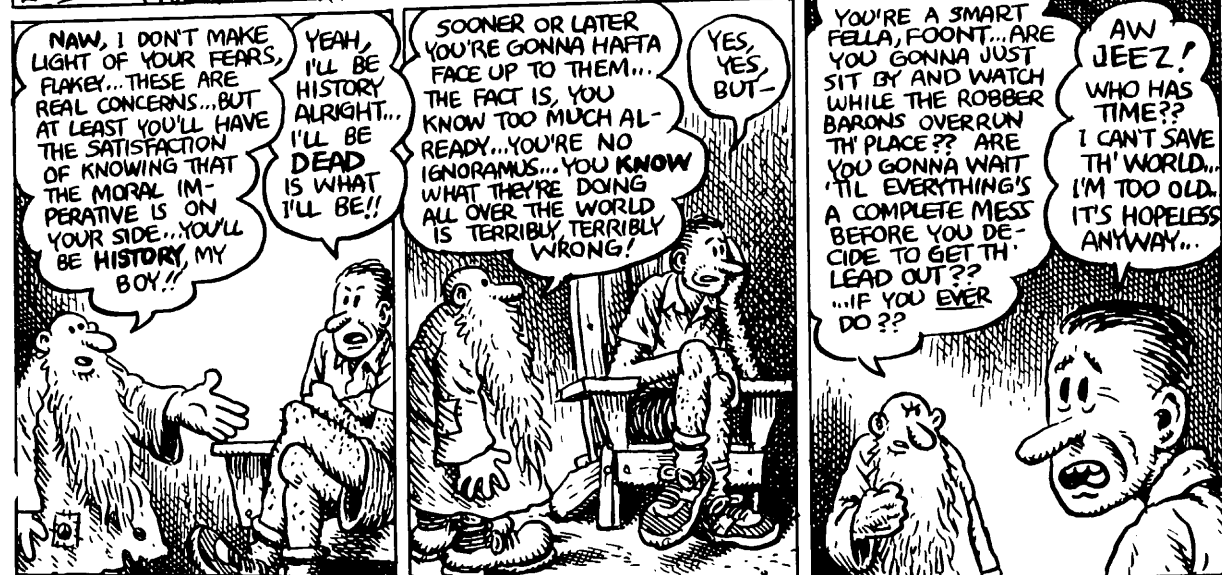
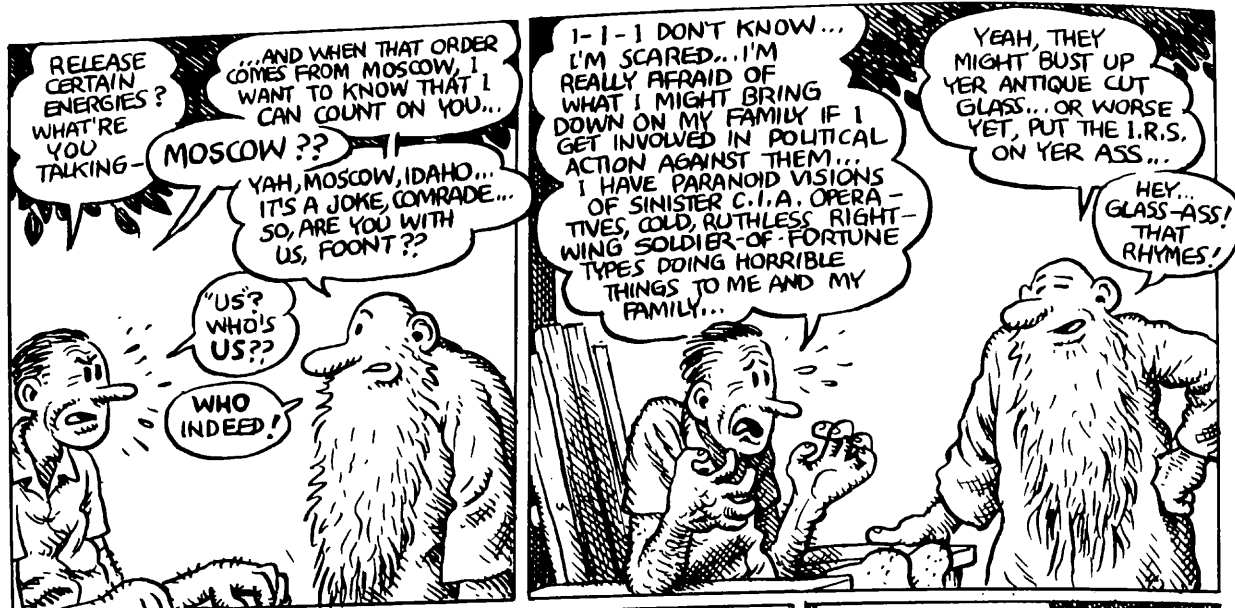
B-B-BUT WE THOUGHT
WE WERE HELPING YOU!
IT SEEMED LIKE THE
ONLY SOLUTION
AT THE TIME...
HONEST!

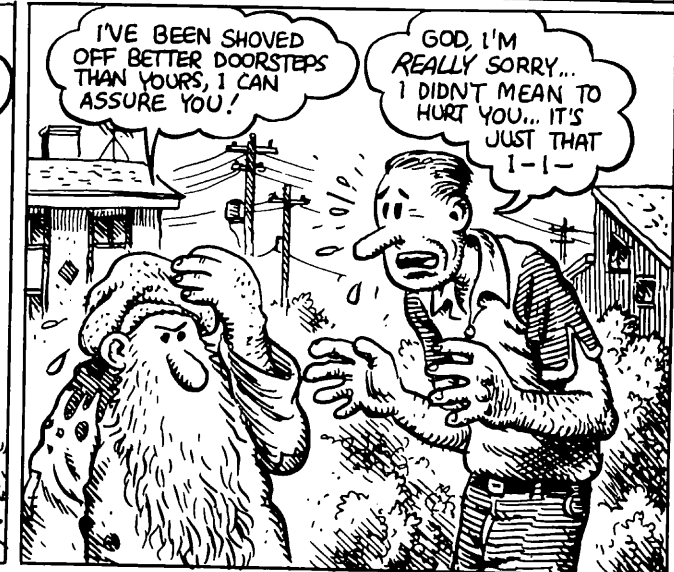
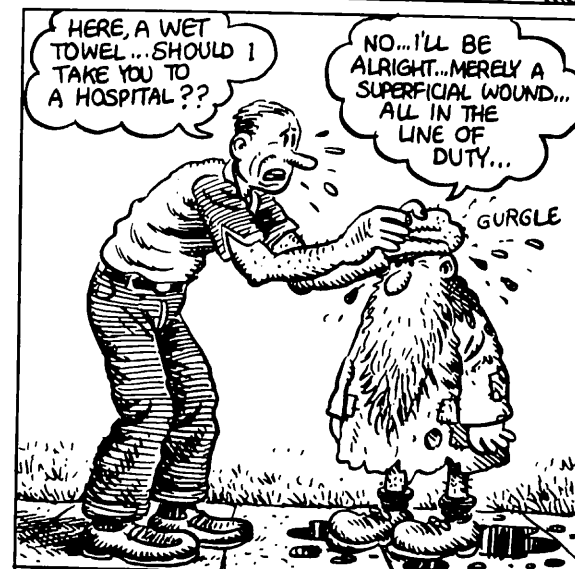
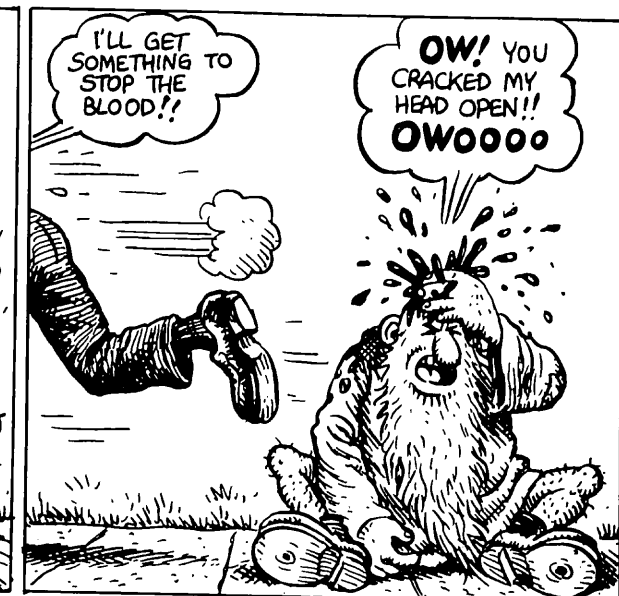
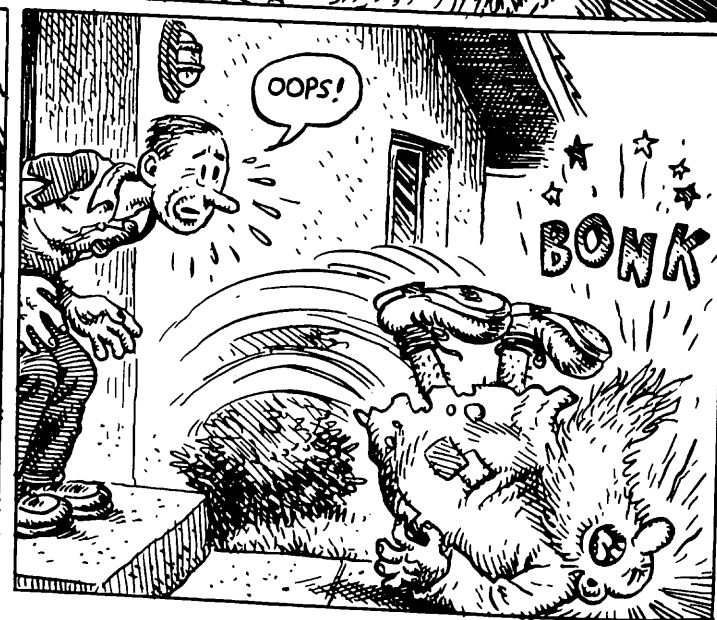
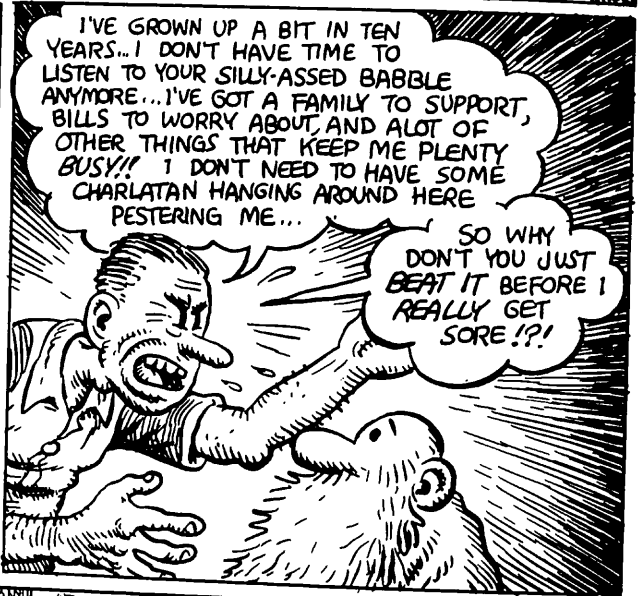
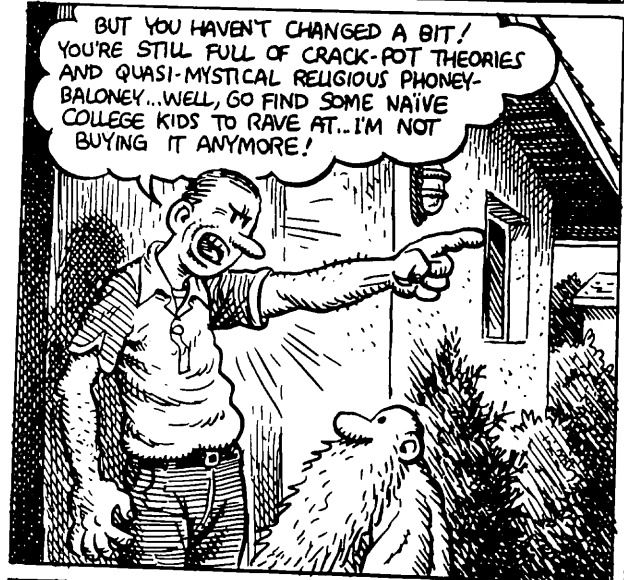
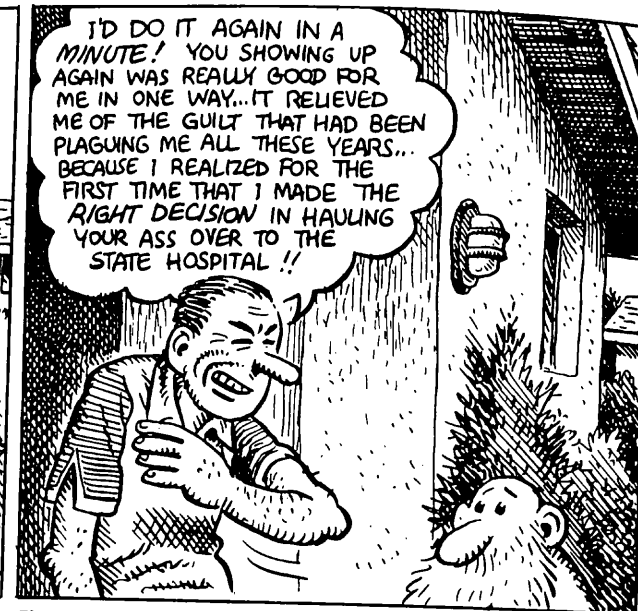
WE REALLY
BELIEVED YOU
WERE CRAZY!
WE-WE-

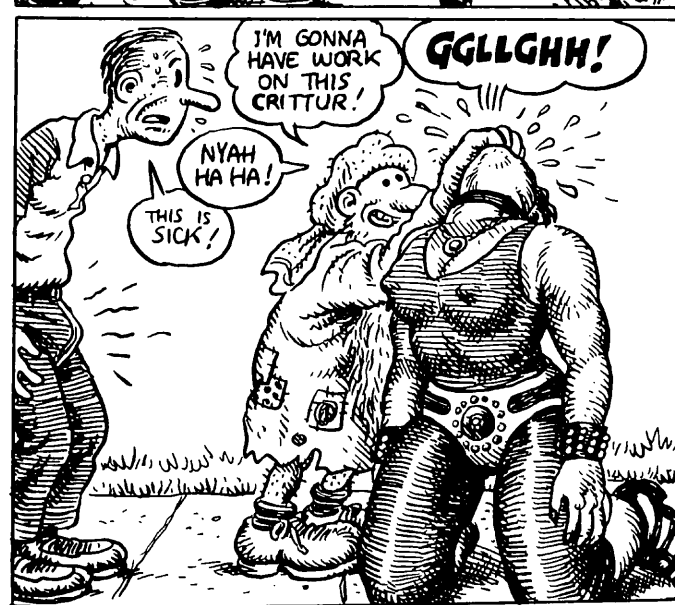
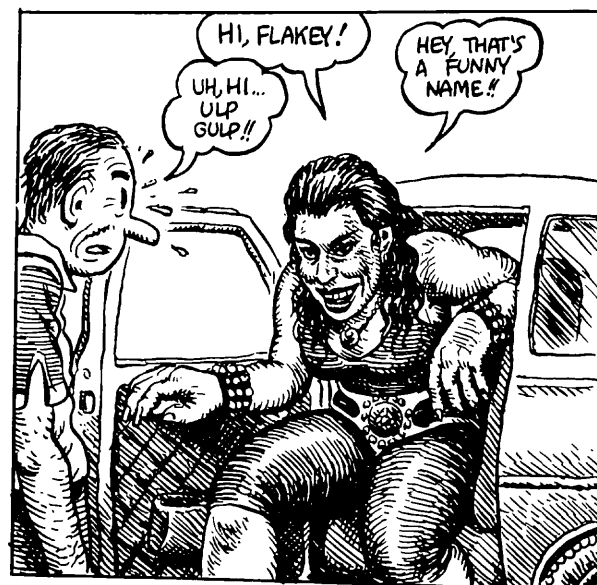
NEVERMIND!!
YOU'VE PAID FOR IT
WITH A THOUSAND SLEEP-
LESS NIGHTS, TOSSING
AND TURNING, DREADING
THE DAY OF MY RETURN
AND THE TERRIBLE
VENGEANCE I
WOULD REEK
ON YOU AND
YOURS...

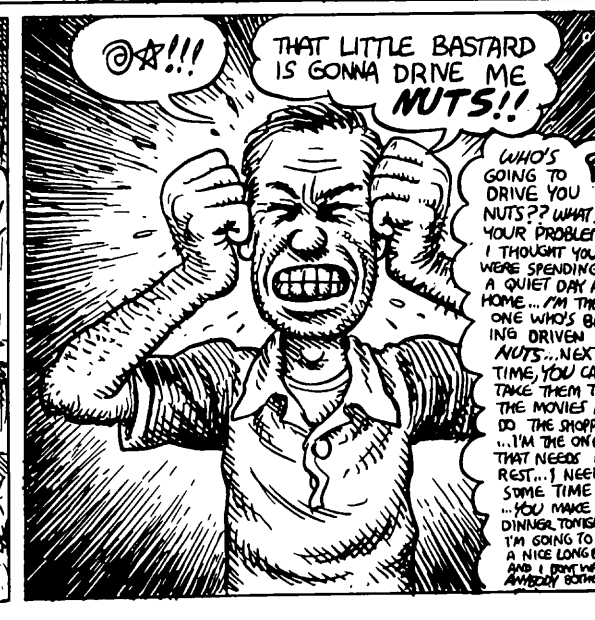
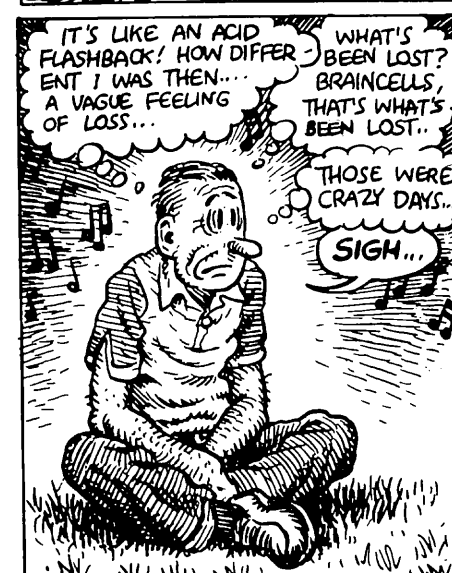
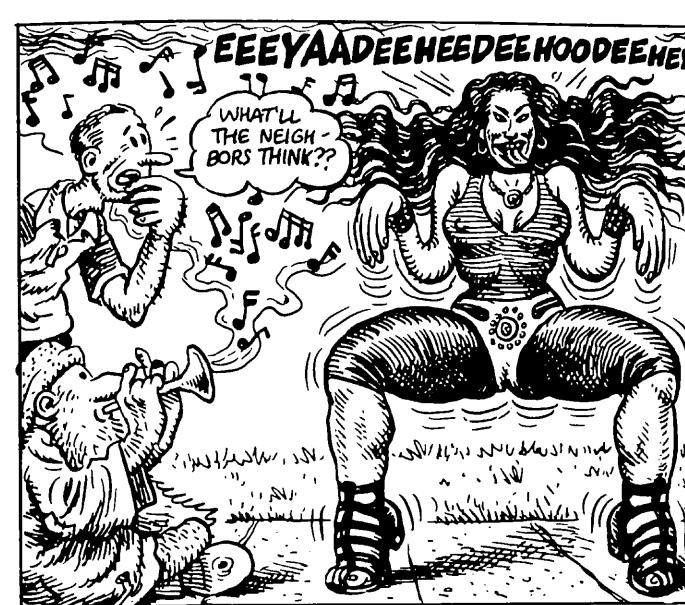
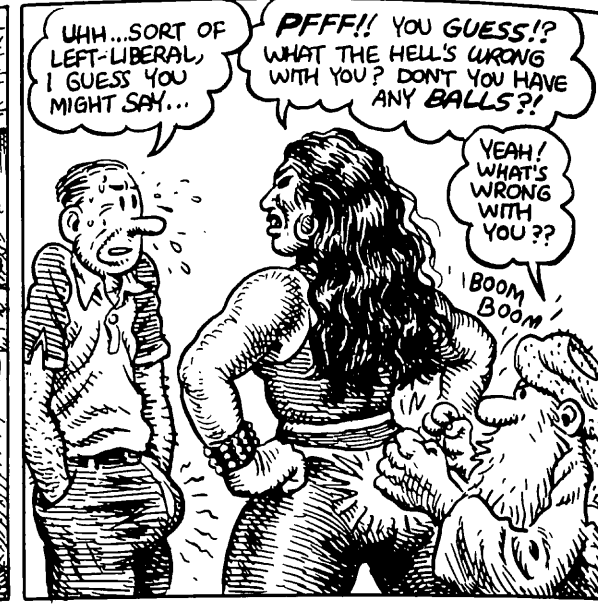
GOSH...AIN'T
IT THE TRUTH!
HOW'D YOU
KNOW??











THE MEETING

IT'S JUST AFTER DINNERTIME IN THE SUBURBS. THE DRONE OF TV SETS IS ALL THAT'S HEARD AS THE HUSH OF NIGHT BEGINS TO FALL. BUT UNDERNEATH THE TRANQUILITY AND WELL-BEING MEN'S SOULS ARE HAUNTED BY SEETHING, SQUIRMING, UNNAMEABLE THINGS... THINGS THAT THREATEN TO SHATTER ALL THEY'VE WORKED TO ACHIEVE!



R. CRUMB '87



I WONDER IF THAT @*%!! MR. NATURAL IS GONNA KEEP PESTERING ME... IT'S BEEN SEVERAL WEEKS NOW SINCE HE SHOWED UP HERE WITH THAT— THAT—



I WUZ SEVERELY TRAUMATIZED THAT DAY!... A DEEPLY DISTURBING EXPERIENCE... THREW ME FOR A LOOP! IT'S LIKE I'VE BEEN WOODDED OR SOMETHING. HE'S FUCKIN' WITH ME, THAT DIRTY @*%!!

IT'S FOR YOU, DAD...
THANKS, MEGAN...

WHO IS IT?



DEVIL GIRL!!
R-RING
WAS SHE REAL?? WAS IT ALL A HALLUCINATION?? MY MIND—



FOONT! THIS'S YER OLD FRIENDLY ENEMY, MR. DIDDY-WAH-DIDDY! LISTEN, WE'RE HAVIN' A MEETING OVER HERE TONIGHT... WANNA COME?
A MEETING? WHO'S GOING TO BE THERE!?

WHO IS IT?



OH, UH... NOT A LOTTA PEOPLE... DON'T WORRY...
YEAH, BUT, LIKE, WHO??

WHATTA YOU CARE?! WE'RE GONNA DISCUSS SOME VERY PERTINENT TOPICS TONIGHT... TH' MIND-BODY SPLIT IN WESTERN SNIVELIZATION, STUFF LIKE THAT...



YOU KNOW CHERYL BORCK... SHE'S THE CRAZY CHICK WHO CALLS HERSELF "DEVIL GIRL." OH WHAT A MONSTER! HA HA... HA HA...
OW! SO, YOU COMIN' OR WHAT? CUT IT OUT, CHERYL! OW!

ULP! GULP!



RUTH, I'M... UH... GOING TO A MEETING... IT'S A NEW ANTI-GROWTH COMMITTEE IN TOWN... WE'RE GOING TO DISCUSS SOME PERTINENT TOPICS... I'LL BE BACK IN A COU-PLA HOURS...
WHAT?! WHEN DID THIS COME UP? WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD ABOUT IT BEFORE? WHY CAN'T I GO? WE COULD'VE HIRED A BABYSITTER... THIS LOOKS VERY SUSPIC-IOUS!



HMM... I'M NOT SURE I CAN MAKE IT... WHO ELSE WILL BE THERE?

BE-JEEZLES, I DON'T KNOW!! ISOBEL ESTRADA AND CHERYL BORCK ARE HERE ALREADY...

HMM... DON'T KNOW 'EM.

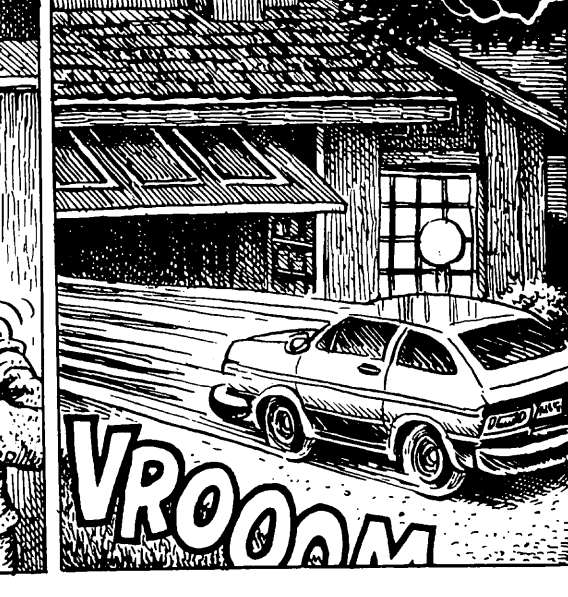
WHO'S ON THE PHONE?



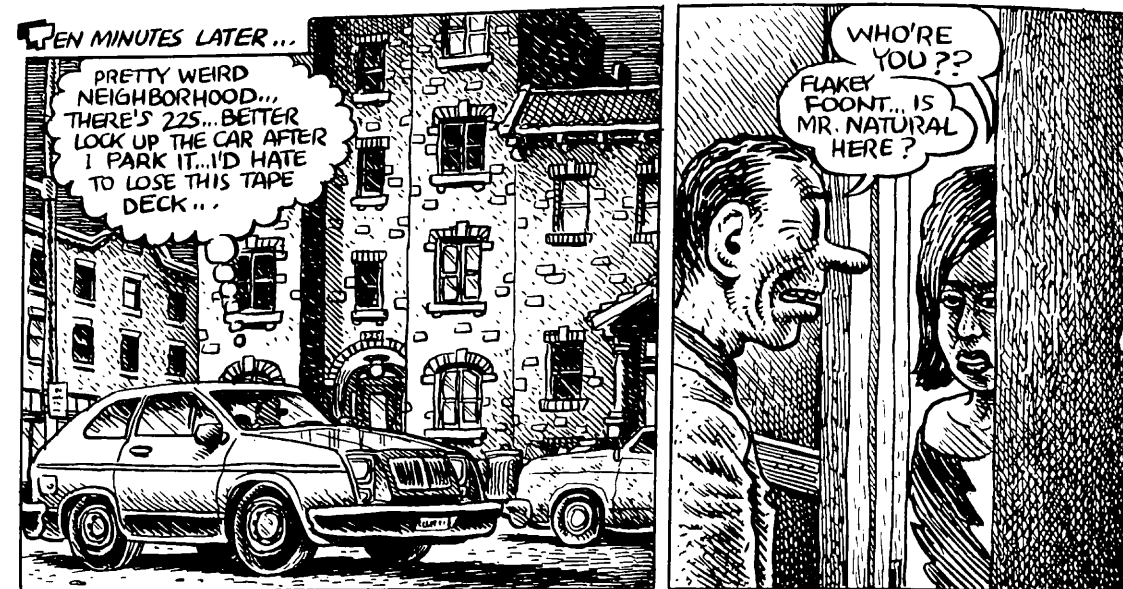
ALRIGHT, I'LL COME... WHU— WHERE IS IT?

MY PLACE... 225 EAST 58TH... RIGHT OFFA DEL PASO BOUL- EVARD... APARTMENT FOUR... RING THE BUZZER DOWN- STAIRS...

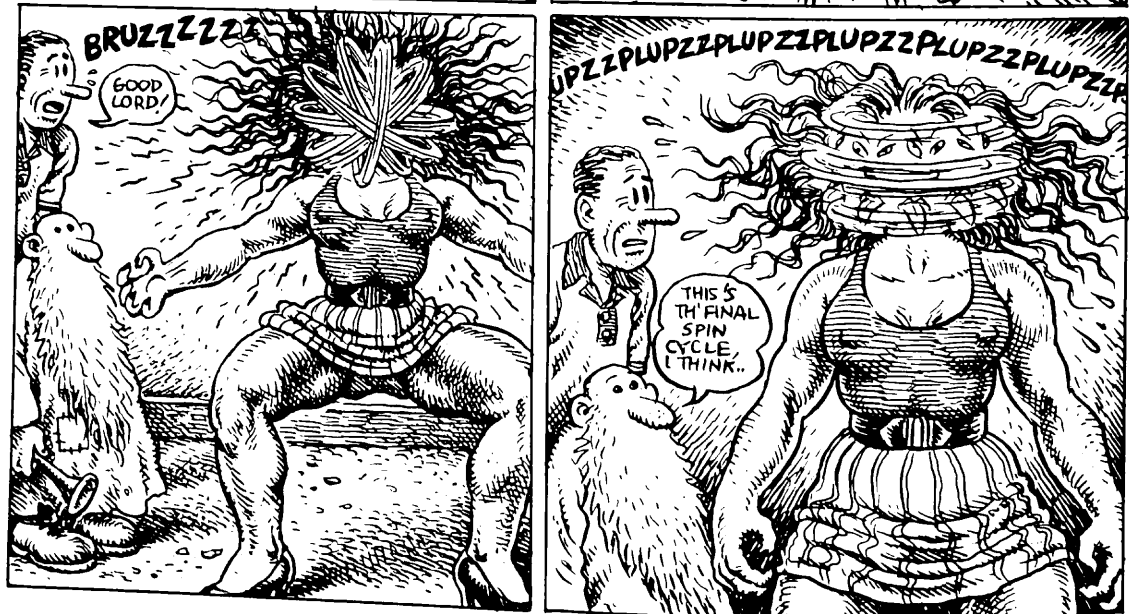
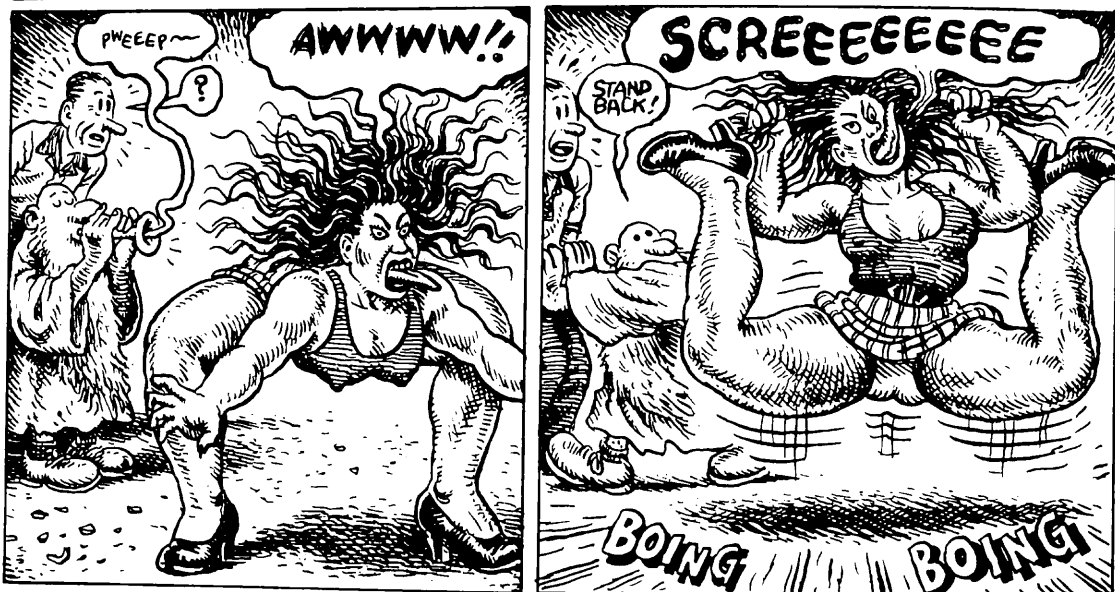
GOT IT... I'LL BE THERE SHORTLY!



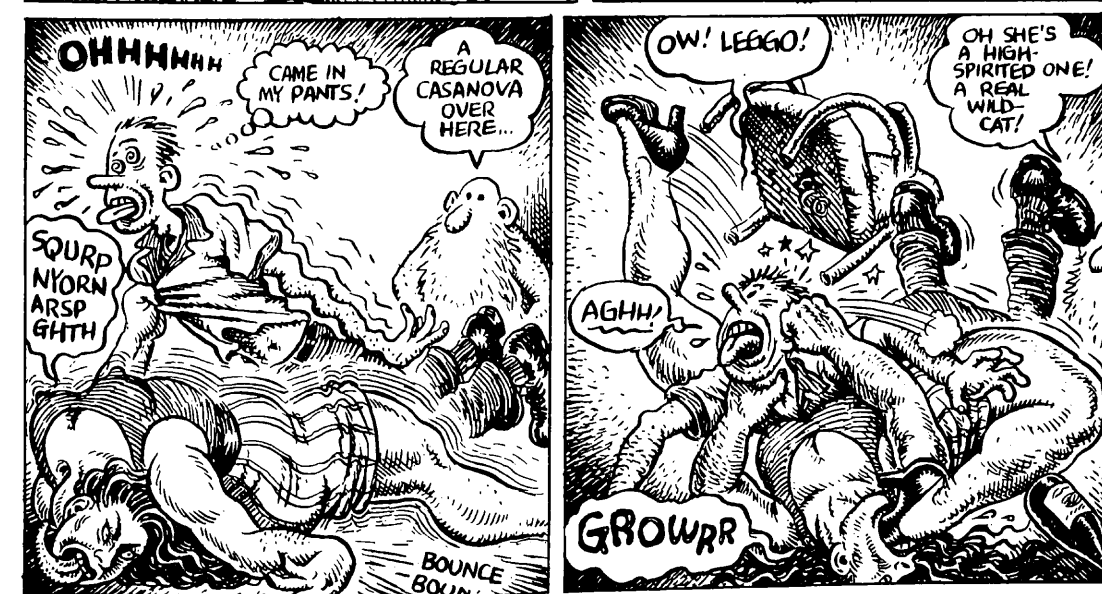
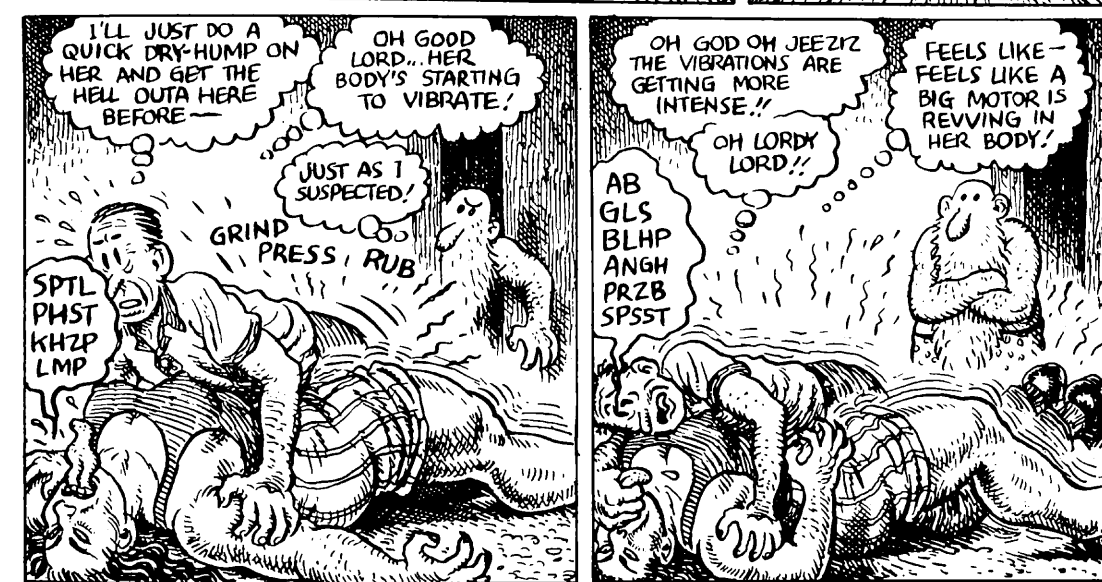
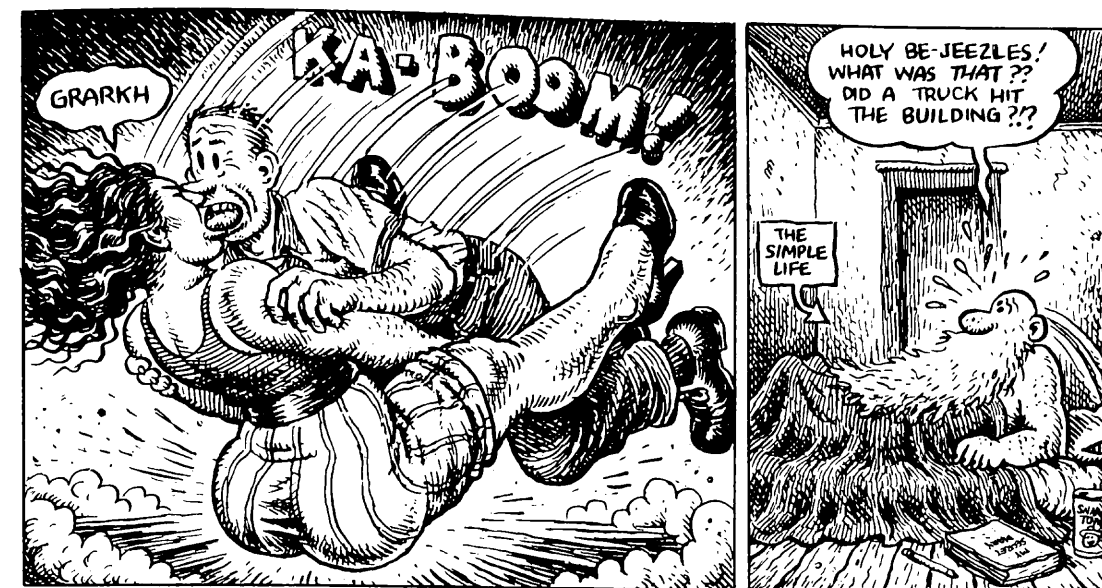
VROOOM

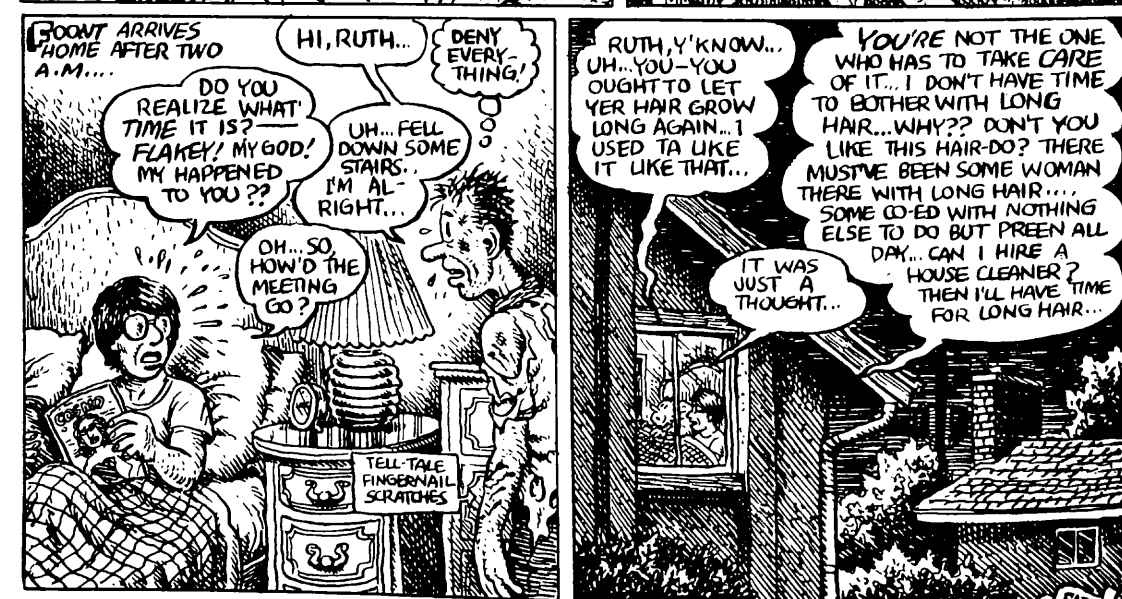












MR. NATURAL

HE'S A NATURAL MAN!

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